

# THE FORTNIGHTLY

---

JUNE, 1938

---

## STRATEGY AND COMMITMENTS

BY LIDDELL HART

CZECHOSLOVAKIA and Spain—at the present time a large part of the debates in Parliament and of conversation among the public revolves between these two poles of Europe. Discussion tends to be focussed on the political and the ethical aspects. These deserve all the attention they receive; but it is unwise to allow them to obscure others which are relevant to the question of what line policy should pursue. There are two angles from which I may perhaps be able to contribute something to its clarification—the strategical and the historical angles. The advantage of approaching present problems from these directions is that they are not so befogged by personal sentiments and interests.

While policy should maintain firm control of strategy it is dependent on a sound strategic foundation—as dependent in times of stress as any mountain climber on his foothold. One false step may be disastrous. It is thus of vital importance for a nation that in all considerations of policy there should be the clearest possible view of the strategic conditions which may affect its issue. The more that we are driven, in the face of changed conditions, to modify our reliance on the original ideals and promises embodied in the League of Nations Covenant, the more essential it becomes to keep a clear view of strategic conditions, unobscured by sympathies or prejudices.

What are the vital conditions of our situation? Every country depends for its existence on food; this country depends mainly on food that comes from overseas. Thus, as long as this unfortunate condition persists, through lack of home resources, the maintenance of the sea-routes takes precedence even of security against air attack on our cities. The preservation of the Empire depends still more, if that be possible, on the maintenance of the sea-routes which link it with this country. These are



reasons why under modern conditions of war, where the range of sustained interference with sea-traffic has been greatly increased, our security is interlinked with that of France, because of geographical contiguity alone. Here our policy is bound up with that of France, whether we like it or not ; her risks are our risks, and are only qualified insofar as we can persuade her to limit her risks by modifications of policy.

Almost as important is the position, and disposition, of the Iberian peninsula. Hence we must ask, and face, the question—what would be the strategic effect upon our chances of success in a war, if Spain were in alliance with our opponents. It is clear, in the first place, that Gibraltar would be untenable as a naval base. The anchorage there is narrow, as the sea-floor shelves sharply, and could not be used by our ships if it was under fire from hostile guns on the Spanish shore. A few mobile batteries, suddenly brought there, would suffice to make it unusable. We should then be left with no secure naval base of our own between this country and Alexandria over 3,000 miles distant. In comparison with this fact it is a secondary question whether our ships would be able to pass through the Straits of Gibraltar into, and out of, the Mediterranean. None the less the mere possibility that air and naval bases on the eastern seaboard of Spain and in the Balearic Isles might be available for our opponents' use seriously complicates the problem of maintaining our traffic through, or even our forces in, the Mediterranean. It is at least an equal danger to the communications between France and her African colonies. Nor does the risk end there. The alternative route to the East round the Cape, and even the sea-approaches to this country, would be jeopardized if hostile submarine and aircraft were able to operate from the north-western and south-western coasts of Spain. And this threat would be extended by an enemy's use of the Canary Isles. Thus, from a strategical point of view the political outcome of the present struggle is not, and cannot, be a matter of indifference to us. A friendly Spain is desirable, a neutral Spain vital.

The results of foreign intervention in Spain are thus of prime concern to us. Military analysis of the course of the civil war there clearly establishes the dominating effect of foreign intervention upon the military balance. In the first phase the



assistance given by Italy and Germany, slight as it was quantitatively, proved an indispensable factor in enabling General Franco to bring essential reinforcements across from Africa and to consolidate his position in Spain. In the second phase the frustration of his then rapid progress against the Government's untrained and ill-armed levies might hardly have been possible but for the timely arrival not merely of a considerable body of genuine foreign volunteers but the still more valuable equipment, especially aircraft, which the Russian Government sent. The dissolution of the deadlock in the spring of 1937 was manifestly due to the much larger supplies of men and material sent by the Italian and German Governments. And General Franco's continued progress during the past year can be traced to the maintenance and increase of this assistance. The inevitable consequence has been his increasing dependence on the countries providing it. If that should lead to him becoming their tool, and Spain's air and sea bases becoming available to them in any conflict where we were engaged on the opposite side, the whole structure of our Imperial Defence might be undermined.

Our strategic survey of the situation thus reaches a point where it is advisable to check the political direction by taking an historical bearing. The hope is cherished in this country that if the present struggle should end in favour of General Franco's forces the victors will repudiate the claims of those Powers which have helped them, and that their needs of financial assistance for reconstruction will lead them back into our arms. Is there adequate justification for this hope? Here past experience may usefully be consulted. History shows that we ourselves have often profited in the past by a long lease of grateful remembrance for our aid to rebellions. It also reminds us that our unsympathetic attitude to the Young Turks in the years preceding 1914 allowed Germany to win their favour, if not their affection, and had issue in Turkey's participation against us in the last war. And this is the most significant because many of the Young Turk leaders, in their struggle against the Sultan's autocracy, instinctively leaned towards Great Britain, while being apprehensive of Germany.



When we turn to recent Spanish history we find, unfortunately, that the classes who have supported General Franco's revolt showed themselves in the main strongly pro-German during the last war. A study of the files of *The Times* provides ample evidence to this effect. As early as September 24, 1914, it recorded that, in contrast to the Republican press, "the Carlist and Catholic press naturally inclines to the German interest as representing the principle of autocracy in a death-struggle with Liberalism." A year later it noted that many Spanish Liberals, and "all the Republicans" were sympathetic to the Allies, whereas the organs of the Army were "manifestly pro-German" and the reactionary parties "make common cause with our enemies." In October, 1916, a long analysis of the situation in Spain, signed by Mr. John Walter, remarked that the press had become "a particularly effective instrument in German hands." It stated that the papers representing "the Church, Carlism, and the forces of reaction" had willingly accepted German patronage, and were "growing in violence and resources," while even those of the moderate Liberal-Conservatives were tending to be drawn "into the Germanophil current." The Radical press, however, was "frankly in favour of England and France." In general, he noted, "the strongest sympathizers with the Allies are to be found among advanced Liberals, Republicans and Socialists." In the autumn of 1917, so crucial for the Allies, *The Times* noted the abundance of small papers, some entirely in German hands, and others under high ecclesiastical patronage, "which all alike traduce England and the English with an unanimity and a persistent animosity which betray a remarkable unity of purpose and control."

To an historically-minded onlooker it would seem stretching hope to the verge of credulity to expect that, after all the help these parties have received from Germany in the present war, they will ungratefully reverse their attitude. The constant care of the British Government to avoid showing sympathy for the Republican Government has not availed to prevent repeated accusations that it is "in the service of the Reds." As long ago as April, 1937, General Queipo de Llano disclosed his thought in a broadcast, wherein he declared: "Our victory will definitely establish Britain's downfall." While he is more



indiscreet than others, there has been a good deal of positive evidence, and still more negative evidence, which is disturbing to those who would like to think that this attitude is unrepresentative. Moreover, a strategic appreciation of the problem of consolidating success in a civil war strongly suggests that, apart from any ties of sympathy and gratitude, General Franco, if he should win, will still need German arms and organization to maintain his hold. If the technique of holding down a country, once domination has been established, is much more highly developed nowadays than ever before, and more effective, it depends, nevertheless, on specialized men and material. And it would seem unlikely that General Franco can provide the type required from Spanish resources. Even if he did no more than borrow foreign advisers, history reminds us of the great influence which a German military mission exerted, in circumstances less favourable to its aims, in bringing Turkey into the war against us in 1914. It would be folly, too, to ignore the implications of some of the points in the Falangist programme which General Franco has adopted—"We have a will to Empire." "Our armed forces must be adequate to assure to Spain . . . that world leadership which is her due. A military view of life shall shape Spanish existence." "Our State will be a totalitarian instrument." "Every man will receive a pre-military education" To sum up, the hope that a Francoist Spain will not become a strategic lever in the hands of his present helpers rests on a rather slender possibility, while the graveness of the danger if it does is a certainty.

Turning next to the problem of Czecho-Slovakia, and of our policy in regard to the threat to her integrity, I propose to take an historical bearing first, and then a strategical.

The question of defining our attitude beforehand to any aggression against Czechoslovakia raises the question of what effect a clear declaration on our part might have had in averting a war in July, 1914. This question has prompted a re-examination of the documents of the origins of the war.

It is apparent from the nature of the long-established German war plan, with its deliberate violation of Belgium's neutrality, that the General Staff accepted the possibility of Great Britain's intervention, and that, taking account only of the immediate



military risks, they were not deterred by the prospect. There is evidence that Graf Schlieffen, who originally conceived the plan, allowed for a British expeditionary force of 100,000 "operating in conjunction with the French." On the other hand, during the days when the plan was about to be put into execution, Schlieffen's successor, Moltke, believed that the British would remain neutral. That belief proceeded from the similar conviction which was common to the Kaiser, the Chancellor and the Foreign Minister. Their tendency to believe that Britain would stand aside was strengthened by the tone of the British press, especially the organs supporting the Government, as well as by reports from Germans in London. Ballin made one such report from his impressions when dining with Grey and Haldane on July 23rd. Lichnowsky, the ambassador, drew a similar conclusion from his interview with Grey on July 24th, although he qualified it by a warning next day of the dangers of rejecting Grey's proposal for mediation. On the 26th Prince Henry of Prussia reported that in his interview with the King the latter had said "we shall try all we can to keep out of this, and shall remain neutral." Prince Henry added that he himself was "convinced that England will remain neutral"—for a time at any rate. This report, although only evidence of Prince Henry's impression, seems to have had a marked effect on the Kaiser. On the 27th the Austrian Government had a telegram from their ambassador in Berlin which conveyed the German Government's desire to keep Britain dangling on "the wire" but no hint of any serious desire to restrain Austria's action against Serbia. Next morning the Austrian Emperor signed the declaration of war against Serbia. The German Government's first cautionary message was sent to Vienna that day—too late.

On the 29th, Lichnowsky reported a conversation with Grey in which the latter had said that if Germany and France were not involved, Britain would not intervene; but had added the warning that "if the issue did become such that we thought British interests required us to intervene, we must intervene at once . . ." If the warning was still somewhat vague, it sufficed to raise the first doubts of Britain's neutrality. The Kaiser burst into violent denunciation of Grey as a "mean



deceiver " and of the King as having perpetrated " the grossest deceit." The practical effect, however, was that the Chancellor sent a series of telegrams to Vienna exhorting the Austrians to moderate their attitude to Grey's proposals for mediation, lest they drag Germany into war at a disadvantage. Later in the day he saw the British Ambassador and tried to bargain for an assurance of Britain's neutrality in case of war between Germany and France. Grey emphatically refused to give any such assurances, but could not give any definite intimation that Britain would support France—so divided was opinion in the Cabinet. Events were now moving too fast in the East to save the peace, but the deterrent effect of the prospect of Britain's intervention is shown in the Kaiser's reluctance to sign the order for general mobilization on August 1st and the delay he imposed on the German Army's advance across the frontiers of Luxembourg and France, of which Moltke has recorded: " It was a great shock to me, as though something had struck at my heart."

While no verdict can be passed with certainty, the general trend of the evidence offers a strong probability that a clear statement of Britain's intentions, had it been possible, would have prevented the war—by prompting the German Government to restrain the Austrian in time. That view is expressed in Admiral von Tirpitz's memories—" Grey would have been able to preserve peace if he had made Bethmann understand in time what England's attitude would be in the event of the conflict between Austria and Serbia spreading. Grey's silence strengthened the Berlin war party in their attitude." More significant, because they were written before instead of after the event, are the words of the message sent to Vienna by the Austrian ambassador on July 27th conveying to the German Government's view that—" It is of the utmost importance that England, at the present moment, should not make common cause with Russia and France."

The general impression left by the evidence is that the Germans were predominantly concerned to prevent our *immediate* participation in a war against them, while prepared to see us drawn into the conflict later. By then they counted on gaining so deep a lodgment in Belgium and Northern France as to give them not only a decisive advantage against the



French but a position that would nullify our power to intervene effectively.

This conclusion has a bearing on the present-day strategic problem. In any future struggle, the first days of war are likely to have increased importance—because of the acceleration of action that is provided by air power and mechanization, and demanded, on the attacker's side, by the difficulty of overcoming modern defence once this has been adequately manned and consolidated. Now we have to face the fact that France is pledged to aid Czechoslovakia if she suffers aggression. So long as that pledge stands, it implies that, even though we avoid giving any similar political pledge, a strategical pledge has been given on our behalf—however little our Government and public may like the thought. For in a practical sense, as already emphasized, our security is bound up with that of France. It may be argued that we can dissociate ourselves from any offensive operations on which France may embark in aid of the Czechs, and only intervene later to prevent France suffering invasion in retaliation. The practical answer is that the first few days of the air struggle may be crucial—for the vitally important balance of air strength on which our own security as well as that of France would depend. It would be an appalling hazard to take the risk of holding our hand—or, rather, our air force—during the days when the air force of France may be crippled and its war industries wrecked.

Could we induce the French to modify their promised support to Czechoslovakia, and, even if we could, would it be wise? I shall only attempt to deal with this question from the strategical angle. Apart from any other claims, this pledge is justified from a military point of view by France's strategic need for a distraction in the East to Germany's power of concentration in the West. Strategically, too, it is easy to discern the cause of Germany's eagerness to procure the detachment of Czechoslovakia from Russian support as a preliminary to the dissolution of the Franco-Soviet Pact. The strain of a two-front war, and the way it can jeopardize the strategic position, have been deeply impressed on the German mind by the experience of 1914-1918. Even if France and Russia still contemplated mutual support, in case of threat to either, not only would the



disappearance of Czechoslovakia's forces remove a considerable weight from their side of the scales, but Russia, especially, would forfeit the chance of using what could be an advanced air base of great potential value in developing pressure on Germany's sensitive spots, and thereby relieving pressure on France.

The political advantages, to all, of a peaceful solution of the Sudeten Deutsch problem in Czechoslovakia are obvious. A settlement that met Germany's wishes, and really satisfied her underlying desires so far as to ensure peace—not only for the moment—would lift an immense load off the minds of the statesmen and peoples of Europe. But it would be wise to take due account of the strategic effects if any such settlement proved only a temporary satisfaction, and Germany were to feel a renewed urge to expand at the expense of her neighbours. With the loss of Czechoslovakia's forces and forward position the chances for combined resistance to a threatening advance elsewhere would be considerably reduced, and thereby the check on an aggressive policy would be proportionately weakened. It is also wise to realize that the further Germany's extension eastwards was carried the more it would strengthen her capacity for sustaining a long war, and thereby diminish present causes for hesitation. Conversely, the more that Spain should come under German influence, the more would this weaken, by back-pressure, the front that the Western Powers could form against aggression. It would be folly to buy momentary relief from the danger of war at the price of ultimate downfall. A settlement that spelt the exclusion of Russia's forces from the balance, while establishing Germany's domination of Czechoslovakia, would be a very bad bargain, strategically, for the ultimate settlement of Europe. More attractive in appearance, is the prospect of a mutually guaranteed neutralization of Czechoslovakia. But even this proposal requires the more careful attention to its terms, and their strategic effects—all the more because of its obvious attractions. History warns us that nothing has proved more upsetting to peace-seeking calculations than the temptation of buying peace.



## DANUBIA WITHOUT AUSTRIA

BY GRAHAM HUTTON

“**A**. E.I.O.U.—*Austria erit in orbe ultima*—” Austria will remain to the end of the earth. That was the confident device of the Habsburg Empire. It suffered a shock when Napoleon ended the Holy Roman Empire. It suffered a worse shock a century later when the Empire of the Habsburgs disintegrated, as had long been foretold and foreseen, under the stress of defeat in war. But *an* Austria remained—a rump-Austria ; the Austria which Ignaz Seipel hoped and prayed would resurrect as the cultural and Catholic nucleus of the Succession States. Now Austria has disappeared. Even the name has been wiped out by a Prussian occupation. Instead, re-appears the Ostmark—the Eastern March—of Charlemagne’s creation more than a millennium ago. The Third Reich of the Nazis has made its first, and peaceable, conquest of territory that was never German in Bismarck’s sense of the word. The question on everyone’s lips in Central Europe is : who is next on the list ?

More than a frontier was altered when the Reichswehr rolled into Austria. Germany was on the Brenner Pass in less than twelve hours ; all round Bohemia and Moravia in less than a day ; and on the borders of Hungary, Yugoslavia and South and East Switzerland at the same time. It is, indeed, a new Central Europe. There is grave internal trouble in Czechoslovakia ; the prospect of domestic dissension in Hungary ; and a delicate internal balance in Rumanian politics. In Yugoslavia, the Government is wondering which way to turn, towards the Rome-Berlin axis, towards Great Germany, or towards a possible London—Paris—Rome axis. In Bulgaria, there has been an *impasse* in domestic politics since the last elections. All these countries now find their foreign trade bound up, to a large percentage of its total, with that of Great Germany. Even



Italy herself now finds that over a fifth of her foreign trade is with Great Germany. The Rome Protocols of 1934, which linked Hungary, Austria and Italy together, have been distorted by the elimination of independent Austria. Therewith, Hungarian trade with Italy has been rendered more difficult, since Austria used to take less of Hungary's cereals and Italy more, Hungary being recouped from Vienna; and now Hungary is pushed further into the rigid trading system of Germany—up to 44% of her exports went to Germany-Austria last year. Czech industries find their traditional links with their Austrian counterparts interrupted in favour of Germany. Yugoslavia is driven more into the German system; and Rumania, too. Bulgaria depends as to one half of her exports on Great Germany. And, finally, Vienna—the great commercial administrative, and transit centre of all Danubia—gives Great Germany control over trade routes and freight rates. Even the internationalized Danube traffic, mostly in a Western direction, now falls mainly within Germany's ambit; and already, a year ago, she denounced the international clauses of her post-war agreements over traffic on German rivers.

These economic revolutions might be critical enough on their own. But the elimination of an independent Austria aggravates the tension long growing inside each Central European and Balkan country over domestic and foreign policies. In the first place, the current problems of Czechoslovakia have been greatly intensified.

For three years past the Czechoslovak State has been threatened by both internal and external dangers. Internally, the Government of M. Hodza, a coalition led by the Agrarians, has veered between the Right and the Left, between a reconciliation with Germany on the one hand and, on the other, a maintenance of the Czech-Russian and Czech-French Pacts, the Little Entente treaties, etcetera. As the minority problem of the Sudeten German Party is also the central problem in internal politics, M. Hodza's dilemma has been whether to try to make a coalition *with* Herr Henlein's Party, or whether to assert the State's authority in the German areas and wait for the creation of a European incident. The right-wing Czech Agrarians have long been of the former opinion. They have never liked



the old left-wing Parties of Masaryk and Benes. Like Herren von Papen and Hugenberg in Berlin in early 1933, they think that the only way to deal with an extremist movement is to invite it into collaboration. On the other hand, the majority of Czechs in the country think with the Liberal Parties : namely, that if there is to be a dust-up in any case, it is absurd to play the part of a von Papen, a Seyss-Inquart, or a Hindenburg ; one must take a stand on the independent right of Czechoslovaks—as long as an independent Czechoslovakia exists—to devise their own domestic and foreign policies in accordance with the will of a majority of the people. If Europe, if the Western Powers, want to see the Czechoslovak democracy wiped off the map after Spain and Austria, well, let it happen ; that is what the majority of Czechs think. But, they add, it will not help the Western Powers—except to gain a few more months or weeks of respite before an inevitable show-down of forces occurs between the fundamentally irreconcilable aims and methods of an ever-expanding Great Germany and of the Western democracies. The Czechs are sober and cool. They can lose the game from within their own frontiers, if their country is forced to become what certain British journals have been pleased to call “ a neutral State ”—*scilicet* : a vassal of Great Germany. But they know what such euphemisms conceal. After all, the *defenestratio* which unleashed the Thirty Years War took place in Prague ; and since 1648 the Czechs know what “ a neutral State ” means.

The danger for Czechoslovakia is that, abandoned by France (because of British pressure under the new Anglo-French alliance) and not daring to invoke Russian aid for fear of Germany, the State will be put in cold storage by a combined Nazi-Sudeten “ cold *Putsch*.” Paralysis of State authority will spread from the German areas ; the Sudeten minority will, in fact, decree what the Government shall or shall not do ; and then the State can be split up between Poles, Germans, and Magyars. As the Czech mayor of a small Czech town in Bohemia said to the writer a few weeks ago : “ Of war I am not afraid. But much more of this peace will drive me crazy”. The technique of the Trojan wooden horse has been so well learned and so successfully applied by the Nazis in the Saar, Danzig, and Austria, that it is



already on the verge of bringing off another "peaceful" *coup* in Czechoslovakia.

In Hungary the outlook immediately after the seizure of Austria was grim. M. Darányi's Cabinet was weak; sympathy with Italy and Germany was strong, as Magyars thought these two partners of the Axis the best agents for treaty-revision; and in any case Hungary had now a frontier with Germany that was quite indefensible. Nearly half her foreign trade, a trade wholly in agricultural products, was bound up with Great Germany; and her agriculture depended on exports. There were over a million landless peasants and their dependents—about a ninth of the total population. Finally, in the last eighteen months a strong right-wing organization led by an ex-officer of the General Staff, Major Szálasi, and by various other discontented elements in the political *coulisses* had been built up under the symbol of the "arrow-cross." This anti-democratic movement had its adherents in the Army and public offices; and its loud denunciations of the Darányi Cabinet's ineffectiveness carried some weight. Since last summer, the downturn in the world level of prices had caused fresh economic difficulties for Hungary's export trade; and bad tempers were brewing. Accordingly, after the elimination of Austria, the pressure of Great Germany on Budapest was made evident at once.

For two months the Cabinet of M. Darányi, largely owing to the personality of the Prime Minister, havered. Torn between fear of Germany and anxiety over Hungary's fate at Germany's hands, the Cabinet became paralysed. It did not assert the authority of the State as against Major Szálasi, his followers, and other "arrow-cross" leaders. But it did bring in a promised anti-Semitic Bill: a not very severely anti-Semitic Bill, by comparison with German precedent, but severe enough to drive Hungary's Jewish commercial leaders into a panic. Business came to a halt. Dr. Imrédy, President of the National Bank, who had only joined the Cabinet a few months earlier in order to execute his Five Years Plan for the expenditure of 1,000,000,000 pengő on public works from loan and capital levy, found that his difficulties in securing co-operation from the business class were being enhanced. A loud clamour arose on all sides that M. Darányi should forthwith proceed to grasp



nettles. In the second week of May, the leading Senators and statesmen of post-war Hungary called on the Prime Minister and voiced their grave misgivings over the conduct of affairs. And at the end of the week, on Friday, May 13th, M. Darányi resigned in favour of Dr. Imrédy.

The new Prime Minister has had to introduce two men into his Cabinet whose general outlook is certainly far from being identical with that of their chief. General Rácz, the new Defence Minister in place of the former liberal-minded General Roeder, is widely credited with being a firm friend of Germany and even, reports say, of being sympathetic to the "arrow-cross" movement in domestic affairs. M. Sztranyavszky, the new Minister of Agriculture, formerly Speaker of the Lower House, is a man of the people; but, like many such, a man of strong Right-wing tendencies. But Dr. Imrédy himself, M. Kánya who remains Foreign Minister, and M. Keresztes-Fischer, the new Minister of the Interior, are a triumvirate in whose hands lies the possibility of firm action both in domestic and foreign affairs. An anti-German policy is unthinkable for Hungary. But Magyars are proud and spirited; they love their independence; and Dr. Imrédy's abundant ability in the spheres of economics finance, and public affairs will ensure to his country and people at least the greatest possibility of freedom of action, at home and abroad, during the next critical months.

Hungary's dangerous geographical position, as well as her small population and lack of modern armaments, impose limits on her freedom of action in foreign policy. The recent exacerbation of anti-Czech feeling in Hungary has its dangers, especially if a conflict embracing Czechoslovakia were to break out farther West; but the Little Entente treaties, which specifically envisage warlike action by Hungary as a *casus belli*, were reaffirmed at Sinaia at the beginning of May, and if a fatal spark caused a conflagration throughout Central and South-Eastern Europe, the possibility that Russia might enter Rumania to shield the oil-wells there must not be overlooked. Thus, the question of the direction of Germany's new *Drang nach Süd-osten* becomes important.

It is reported that, in Rome, Herr Hitler agreed to leave Yugoslavia within the Italian sphere of influence, but that



Signor Mussolini agreed to leave Hungary and Czechoslovakia to Germany. If this be true, the Duce has certainly been forced to give hostages to fortune. Perhaps the new Italo-German frontiers and the high-sounding Brenner vow of Herr Hitler carried the day. But certain facts remain: *e.g.*, if Herr Hitler keeps his word about Yugoslavia he still remains less than 50 miles from Trieste. The Brenner vow may be kept, but Fiume and Venice are vulnerable, from Carinthia; more than 21% of Italy's entire foreign trade is now bound up with Great Germany; and, finally, once Germany walks through Hungary or Slovakia to Rumania, Bulgaria and Greece, the command of the Adriatic will be the reversion, not of the Duce but of the *Führer*. Consequently, the positions of Rumania and Yugoslavia become decisively important in this scheme of things.

After the Nazi revolt against Dollfuss in 1934, crushed mainly by the Duce's movements of Italian troops and aircraft, the Duce himself began to flirt with the idea of strengthening the resistance of Austria and Hungary to German pressure—they had been linked to Italy by the Rome Protocols of 1934—in a wider system of economic and political scope. Pourparlers with M. Hodza about his "Danubian Plan" were begun in Vienna; relations between Hungary and Yugoslavia were improved; the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, M. Stoyadinovitch, was cast by Signor Mussolini for the rôle of honest broker between Prague and Budapest; and an Austrian-Italian-Yugoslav-Hungarian-Czech *bloc* was envisaged, which could be both economically, politically, and militarily strong enough to constitute an impassable bastion in Central Europe against Germany. These efforts failed because Signor Mussolini was pushed by Herr Hitler into Abyssinia, North Africa, Spain, to such an extent that, by the beginning of 1937, the Duce was far more dependent on the Rome-Berlin axis than the *Führer*. Thus, since then, the *Führer* has been able to do what he liked in Central Europe by warning Signor Mussolini of the drastic consequences which would befall if Italy obstructed.

To-day, after the destruction of Austria, Italy's prospects throughout South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East look grim beside those of Germany. To Rumania and Yugoslavia, therefore—the outer rim of Italy's



former bastion—falls the duty of warding-off the German advance. How do they stand ?

Until the beginning of March, it was generally thought that Rumania must already be written off as in the Nazis' camp. This impression was the outcome of the King's appointment of the late M. Goga as Prime Minister (with no popular support) in January. The Fascist Iron Guard of M. Codreanu had been twice told to dissolve since one of its members murdered a Rumanian Prime Minister, M. Duca, in 1934. Twice it had nominally done so ; and twice M. Codreanu and his friends had resurrected it with renewed forces—the last time under the name "All for the Fatherland." Before the elections last January it had made a surprising rally ; and the dissidents of all parties looked upon it as a kind of Cave of Adullam. The forty-five days of M. Goga's rule, in which he ran the gamut of anti-Semitism and authoritarianism, caused so violent a reaction among the sturdy and long-suffering Rumanian peasantry and workers that King Carol and his personal advisers became scared. M. Goga was summarily dismissed, and an attempt was made to form an all-party Cabinet under the Patriarch, M. Miron-Christea. This, too, only lasted a time ; for the older parties carried on their intrigues. The King received news of subversive activities in the Army on the part of the Iron Guard. He acted in two short, sharp successive blows. First, in March, he abolished the Constitution and replaced it with a kind of royal dictatorship, exercised through a Coalition Cabinet and new Privy Council drawn mainly from men of his own generation. Secondly, at Easter, he used the military to arrest the ringleaders of the Iron Guard *en masse*. They were rounded up all over the country. Documents showed the most compromising of foreign relations.

Thus, for the time being at least, King Carol and his personal friends are supreme ; and their sudden assumption of power has been mainly popular. But what can they do if the economic and political pressure from Germany increases ? On the one side they have to conserve a third of Rumania's foreign trade, now bound up with Great Germany. They have to watch internal Hungarian developments like a cat a mouse. And, on the other hand, they have to remember that, if Germany really went ahead



peacefully or by war in their direction, the Russians might be over the Bessarabian border like a shot, making for the Rumanian oilfields in order to forestall the Germans. The Rumanians, like their allies to the north, the Poles, do not want either the Germans or the Russians to make their own country into a battle-field, as it was in the last war. So the Rumanians are tempted to contract-out of the Little Entente and join forces with their neighbours the Poles in an effort to make a *cordon sanitaire* right through Europe, from north to south, between Russia and Germany. The elimination of Austria and the threats to Czechoslovakia (from extremist Hungarians as much as from Germans) have forced Rumanians to this conclusion ; but if a conflict became widespread in the Danubian plain—*e.g.*, involving Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Germany—the Rumanians realize that it will be virtually impossible for them to keep the Russians away from Slovakia (even if only by air) and at the same time to hold the Hungarians in check from the erstwhile Hungarian province of Transylvania, without becoming involved in war themselves. Still to-day it is hard to decide whether the Rumanians, as a people, would not, in such circumstances, voluntarily link up with the Russians, who are at least related to many of their own citizens in northern and eastern Rumania.

Much the same considerations sway the Yugoslav statesmen ; only in this case Yugoslavia already has a new common frontier with Germany, and the two Powers between which Yugoslavs find themselves are the Germans and the Italians. They are like the Poles and Rumanians in this regard : a small, spirited, independent people left with unenviable choices. Yugoslavia is near enough to Italy to be able to go with Italy into a combination of Western Powers embracing Italy. But it is dubious if Italy can even go thus far since Austria disappeared. Thus, Yugoslavia watches Hungary with one eye and Germany with the other ; consults with Rumania and Czechoslovakia in the Little Entente ; speaks fairly with France ; and waits for signs of weakening in the Rome-Berlin axis—which now crosses Yugoslav territory.

Three things greatly perturb all Central and South-Eastern European States now that Austria has gone. First, the

incalculable indifference of the British Government to the fate of half the Continent ; secondly, the enormous economic control of these States by Great Germany, achieved in four years ; and lastly, if they are to be completely abandoned by Britain and her servant, France, the prospect of grave domestic disruptions in these Central and South-East European States, as their *régimes* come to be altered at the command of the Nazis. There is something of cosmic tragedy, something fatal in the Greek sense, about the deep misgivings and premonitions now surging in the hearts and minds of Czech, Slovak, Magyar, Croat, Serb, Slovene, and Ruman. To them, Austria was not very important, economically or politically. It is not so long ago that they feared her eagles. But now that she has been swept from existence, a new and terribly incalculable chapter in their history of struggle and internecine conflict opens before them. Small wonder if the hesitancy and double-mindedness that have for so long characterized British foreign policy have now communicated themselves to that congeries of would-be independent States, Danubia without Austria.



## THE GERMAN RACE-IMPULSE

BY ERNEST HAMBLOCH

THE *Drang nach Osten* is not a political aim. It is something far deeper than any conception of national boundaries.

It can hardly be considered as a national ideal either, for its appeal to the man-in-the-street in Germany is not an immediate one. It is an impulse of race, for *Drang* is literally a "throng"; and in its application to political aims the "urge to the East" is significant because of its underlying racial impulsion. All German talk of political encirclement by hostile nations—talk as common to-day as it was just before the 1914 War—is simply an expression of irritation at being surrounded by a 'madding crowd' of inferior races. The feeling is quite sincere, because it is instinctive; but it is not necessarily rational on that account. Indeed the difficulty of dealing politically with the aspirations and ambitions of the German people resides precisely in the fact that there is no rational basis on which discussion can profitably take place. No German leader has ever said or will ever say what it is that Germany wants in order to be politically satisfied, for no German knows. To the German, polity as the civil order of organized States is an alien conception. Voluntary discipline as the basis of domestic stability, and mutual concession as the means of international peace have no meaning for him.

In international relations the German has never felt himself to be tied by any of the rules of the political game. International law is for him an interesting abstraction or, according to circumstances, a useful convenience which it may suit him to invoke in his favour. What he will never admit is that it lays down any rule of conduct which he ought to obey, or that it constitutes any code of ethics to which he must in honour conform. It is not merely that Law must give place to Power—

*Macht geht über Recht*—but that “German truth,” “German honour,” and “German faith” are for him conceptions apart. They are things peculiar to his race. They are sacred—things so holy that those virtues cease to have any meaning for him if they are profaned by participation in them of the rest of mankind : they must be appropriated to the German *Gesinnung* if their virtue is to remain. Thus Germanized, they take on a religious symbolism, as of something which has occult power to deify the Race. Shared with others they become defeasible.

The anti-Semitic extravagances of the Germany of to-day have as one of their root-causes the fact that the Jews consider themselves The Chosen People. That is worse than the sin against the Holy Ghost, for, though the German does not consciously aspire to that theological distinction, he is sub-consciously quite convinced that *he* belongs to a Predestined Race. That is what makes international relations with Germany so difficult. It is fruitless to attempt political discussion with a predestinarian to whom all things are lawful provided they are expedient. Thus when Hitler referred to the annexation of Austria as “the return” of Austria to Germany he was talking political nonsense, since Austria never formed part of political Germany. But he was talking “German sense”, for Teutons were being brought within the Germanic fold under one German shepherd. Unfortunately for the peace of the world the idea of *Grossdeutschland* is no idyllic conception of peaceful contentment under a pastoral *Führer*. That would imply some sense of national boundaries on more or less rational political and geographical bases. But that sense does not exist in the German conception of things as they ought to be. Of all peoples of Western Europe the Germans are unique in never having shared in the sentiment of political nationality which emerged after the Napoleonic wars. Throughout the whole of the troubled period of international congresses and national revolts which then followed, from 1815 to 1830, the Germans remained essentially feudal. The eventual founding of the German Empire in 1870 was merely a stuccoed façade which did nothing to change the fundamentally feudal outlook of the German people in their domestic relations. It was indeed because of their failure to establish any basis of national unity



in 1848 that Bismarck made his famous remark about the necessity of "solving problems by blood and iron." Thereafter he proceeded to put his theory into practice by making a feudal war against Germanic Austria in 1866 and a war of rapine against France in 1870. Even so, he left the problem unsolved; for the answer to the question "What is the German's Fatherland?" is still that contained in the celebrated poem of Ernst Arndt in 1810: it is 'everywhere where there is a German.'

\* \* \* \* \*

The Treaty of Verdun of 843 A.D. gave birth eventually to France, Germany and Italy as national political entities. Italy's political growth was, it is true, particularly slow; but her case was a special one and her failure until 1870 to evolve a unified nationality was as much due to a combination of tragic outside circumstances as to any defects of national character. French and Germans, however, set out from the same starting-point of the Frankish Empire, and their development might well have proceeded on more or less parallel lines. Indeed, as a homogeneous race, the Germans started with certain advantages. A century after the Verdun treaty the French had already begun to develop national ideas. Yet after a lapse of nearly eleven centuries the Germans have not evolved anything better than mystic conceptions about the race superiority of the Germans. Although far less touched by Roman civilization than the peoples west of the Rhine, they might have been welded into a sturdy and prosperous nation like the French, but for one illusion. In 962 A.D. Otto I. of Saxony was crowned emperor by the Pope, and ever afterwards the Germans intuitively hugged the medieval dream of a World Empire which should surpass even that of Charlemagne—and dreams know no frontiers.

The German "squeeze-out" east and south-east was always a national bent, for it was based on an instinctive offensive-defensive attitude towards the barbaric hordes of the East. Yet Germany remained an isolationist *pur sang*. The history of Europe might have been pleasantly different, had the Germans ever considered themselves as the Eastern outpost of Western civilization. Expansion westwards presented certain well-defined difficulties, military and political, but especially social.

From the social point of view Germany may hope to bolster up feudalism in Spain in 1938, but she could never hope to re-introduce feudalism into France *manu militari*. Von Moltke indeed proposed trying to annihilate France in 1875, but Bismarck feared complications with England, in spite of certain sympathies which have never failed to characterize the ruling classes of this country since the day when England became a fief of Hanover. In 1914 the immediate military objective of Germany was to neutralize France by lightning victories before England had made up her mind whether she preferred to act as a Great Power or a German feudal benefice: but the prime political-cum-military objective was Eastward Ho to Salonika and beyond.

The underlying principle involved in the *Drang nach Osten* is a clash of races between Teuton and Slav. That is instinctive. Herr Hitler's utterances never fail to correspond to something instinctive in the German people. That is why their appeal is irrational but profound. When he defined Austria as the *Ostmark* of the German race, his appeal was atavistic rather than historical, though visions of Charlemagne and of the Holy Roman Empire now obsess him, as is plain from his new awakening to the intervention of Divine Providence on his behalf. His *Ostmark* definition was not political, but racial, for by implication it extended to the Habsburg Austria, which included Bohemia, Moravia, the Tyrol and Galicia, and stretched out its tentacles over the whole Balkan Peninsula. The German's Fatherland must stretch beyond Austria and the Danube, for "*sein Vaterland muss grösser sein!*"—a correct interpretation of which is that German patriotism is not love of country but love of more country!

"The rare moment has arrived," said Dr. Goebbels in April of this year, "when the world is going to be divided up anew." How does Europe stand in face of that almost instinctive conception? It is unfortunately true that the Germans always think they are oppressed unless they are free to oppress. That is a serf reaction. Serfdom in Germany lasted down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the natural reaction was that thereafter no German ever fought for equality—the essence of the Rights of Man—but for superiority, the only logical



conception of the Rights of a Superior Race. There is indeed nothing new in the Nazi conception of race. Gobineau was the high priest of Aryanism for the men of Bismarck's generation, and the German intelligentsia of Kaiser Wilhelm II.'s day shared the septentriomania of Houston Chamberlain. Germany was incapable of pulling herself together by a national political effort after 1919, as France did after 1871, because Germans had never acquired any real sense of political nationality. That idea, under whatever *régime*, presupposes ideas of equality, enjoyed or attainable, both within and beyond the borders of the nation. But no such common ideal suffices to bind the German people together. There must be a military ideal of a people in arms. As Prince von Bülow wrote in 1914, "the German Empire can live only if it is and remains a Military State."

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

The Western conception of civilization is diametrically opposed to that of the German. For the Western nations the constant political problem is to secure relative stability in Europe by equipoise of power. Peace can, they feel, be obtained over relatively long periods, provided there is equilibrium between the three great component races of the Continent: Latin, Teuton and Slav. Germany tilted that equilibrium to her advantage in 1870. In 1914 she thought she was sufficiently strong to upset it altogether and leave her in the position of dictator of Europe's destiny. She left England out of account, which was literally an error in the fourth dimension. She did so, because she was implementing what is called *Realpolitik*, a policy which Mr. Chamberlain apparently adopted for this country when he referred to the 'real thing' as the true conception of British political ideals. But *Realpolitik* is essentially unreal because it neglects ideals. It is the absence of any real political sense at all, as the Germans have proved again and again. Between 1870 and 1914, for instance, it had become an article of German faith that German aims could be secured by a military gamble at the chosen moment. Hitler's mysticism of to-day is even more dangerous for the equilibrium of Europe. It is a gamble on the threat of war, with monster military parades as the long suit. The game has become more dangerous, because so far Hitler has won it every time he has

played it. That means he will go on. He has no fears of making any mistakes in the fourth dimension, because England has had no measurable international policy for many years.

\*       \*       \*       \*

The clash of Latin, Teuton and Slav aspirations is deeper and more constant than mere political jealousy or economic rivalry. The dislikes and mistrusts are instinctive, transcending temporary forms of government in any country, for changes of *régime* hardly do more than introduce modulations in the foreign policy of a country, without in any way changing the tune. In the case of Teuton and Latin, for instance, the Rome-Berlin axis is about as inspiring to the average Italian as a proposition of Euclid, and in his heart of hearts every Italian wonders if the Brenner Pass is not really Italy's Pons Asinorum. As for the Germans they regard the axis with as little enthusiasm as a young man envisages a marriage of convenience.

The international outlook of a nation is not determined by the foreign policy of foreign ministers or even by dictators. Statesmen are merely transmission lines for conveying permanent currents of feeling: but the motive power is generated by the overwhelming dynamism of a national urge. The permanent policy of a country depends on the character of the people, and in the long run the foreign policy of a country cannot be other than an expression of deep-rooted national aspirations. Changes of *régime* are mere phases of a people's dynamism, and, however forceful their methods, *régimes* can do little to modify the character and temperament of a people. The Italian under Mussolini is not more hardworking, more frugal and more prone to theatricalism than he always was; nor is he less subtle or less artistic. A Russian is not less of a Tartar because Stalin has succeeded the Czar as the Little Father, nor is he less unaccountable to Western minds than he always has been. The German character was a curious medley of mysticism and brutality under Lohengrin-Hohenzollerns. It is not less so under a *Führer* who hovers between the pagan rôle of a sword-forging Siegfried and the mystic impersonation of a "pure fool" Parsifal.

If the motives which set the nations of the world at cross-purposes were merely political, then the spate of international



congresses held between 1815 and 1822 to regulate political differences would not have been followed by forty years of revolts and revolutions all over Europe. If the world's problems were only economic, then the interminable series of world conferences held since 1919 would not have ended in wars, rumours of war and a return to the Dark Ages. It has become politically fashionable to say that nations are not divided by ideologies. But that is merely begging the question, for it is precisely fundamental differences in conceptions of polity which create the abyss of international misunderstanding. It is possible to bridge the abyss in some cases. That should be the task of true statesmanship. But in the German case the abyss is well-nigh unbridgeable. A war which Germany wins would only aggravate the problem. A war which Germany loses would do nothing to settle it, unless, as was not the case in 1918, the German people is convinced that it has suffered a crushing military defeat.

The differences of outlook separating the German people from other nations are profoundly complicated by the fact that German conceptions have got no further than those obtaining during the First Period of Ethnology. For the German, non-Teutons have always been barbarians, mere gibberers, as were the peoples of the New World to the first discoverers. It required a Papal Bull to give to the native inhabitants of the New World the status of rational beings. It would take something more drastic to convince a German that other races can be equal to the Teuton. And under the Nazi *régime* at any rate no German *Führer* is likely to go to Canossa. It remains to be seen whether—after compounding a fascist felony in two continents—England's rôle is now to be that of an accessory after the crime in the inevitable consequences of the German *Drang nach Osten*.

The position of Teutons and Slavs in Europe is a special one. They are still engaged in emergence from nebulous conceptions of what the individual is in relation to the State. They are companions, though rivals, treading the same road, the goal of which is unknown to either, for they are both mystics. The rivalry between them is not any difference of opinion as to what is the ideal form of political governance. It is an

instinctive and mutual mistrust of race. Nothing can remove that mistrust, for the two races have no common meeting-ground, either politically or intellectually, such as Western nations have. The Slav does not aspire to any Latin form of civilization. The Roman conception of orderly government as the condition of peaceful progress under the law is quite alien to his temperament. He is passive on that point, and it does not bother him. But the German is worried about it. He feels himself in a situation of pathetic isolation because, unlike the Slav, he at least had part in Western civilization and might have been a good *civis* of the world. The reaction to that feeling is arrogance and hysteria, the escapist attitude so typically personified in Hitler's attitudes and words. From 1870 to 1914 the German isolation—complex found vent in rampant militarism and in proclaiming that *Kultur* was superior to Latin civilization, though even to-day the Teuton still sub-consciously uses the latter as his point of departure in the comparison.

The Slav is quite willing to come to terms with Western Powers without understanding anything about their modes of thought or wanting to. The German case is different. For at least three generations the German has been taught to consider that for him to recognize affinity with Western civilization was to demean himself. In their mystic appreciation of the "Twilight of the Gods" it is Western civilization that Germans see toppling to its doom. They are to-day more than ever convinced that it would be unworthy of a 'virile race' to claim affinity with the 'effete democracies' or with Western ideals. In German legend and folk lore what is Western is *Welsch*, and for a German that is synonymous with 'false.' The German feels that the Slavs and all the other races of *Mitteleuropa* are a danger to German existence, besides being sub-humans. They are barbarians and ruffians and must be conquered. The German views himself with some complacency as a highly intelligent ruffian, whose rough 'German ethics and brutal methods are but the virile expression of a superior race. In everything he does he feels justified in claiming to be a law unto himself. He has not to reconcile his conduct with the dictates of any civilized usage, and the validity of international law is for him sheer nonsense outside the doors of a library.



The British position in this conflict of races is a peculiar one. No nation owes more to its bed-rock of Roman culture or walks closer in the shadow of Latin civilization. On the other hand the Briton is not a Latin, either in thought or temperament. Equally he is not a Teuton, either in his mental processes or his conceptions of life. But he does resemble the Teuton in temperament. That is why the German reaches out despairing arms, clamouring that the Briton shall come within the Teuton fold. But in spite of all temptation the Briton remains just himself, thus disappointing both Teuton and Latin. He never disappoints the Slav, for the Slav never expects anything from him.

The Latins regard the British soemwhat differently. To them the Briton is quite inexplicable because, though his mental processes are so near theirs, they are quite individual. Again the Briton's intellectual reactions to social and political problems are nearly, but by no means quite similar to theirs. Temperamentally the Briton is, in Latin eyes, so peculiarly aloof that he appears not merely insular, but other-world. In eventual conclusions, however, about the relations between the individual and the State, international law and social order the British focus, though different from the Latin view, strikes the same angle, so that the Latin, always on tenterhooks about the "British decision," is resigned to being kept in doubt until the eleventh hour. For all practical purposes that decision in the end coincides with the Latin one on all fundamental questions of principle; but, like the gunner in Kipling's story, the political Briton is always temporizing till the sights come on.

Germans have fine achievements to their credit in the realms of science, art and literature, but on the political side they are atrophied. Germany's philosophy has thus petered out in mere metaphysics; her patriotism has been drilled into militarism; and her lyrical poetry has degenerated into hysterical paganism. Germans have been trained in everything—except political thought, which alone can co-ordinate national attributes. Essentially gregarious, the German is myopic. He cannot see clearly beyond the confines of tribal frontiers. When he tries to look at the world outside he is blinded. He has no political outlook, for that implies international collaboration and mutual

concession. He has merely a *Weltanschauung*, a kind of terrestrial star-gazing, which sounds so big and is really so small. He thus places himself between the two alternatives of World Domination or Downfall. And, having done so, he then alleges that that is where the jealousies of other folk have put him. It is a grim prospect, but Germans have a legendary liking for things grim. Faced by those sole alternatives of World Domination or Downfall the German naturally prefers the former, and the achievement of that alternative, as silly as it is terrible, then constitutes for him the "mighty problem of the age" for which he sees no other solution than the Bismarckian one of nearly a century ago : blood and iron.

The *Drang nach Osten* is the most important, because it is the most instinctive, development of that philosophy of predestined expansionism. It is bound up with the *furor teutonicus* which, as Herr Hitler reminded his hearers at Graz at the beginning of April, "nothing can resist." It is a philosophy fraught with immediate tragedy for the non-German peoples of Central Europe. It will inevitably be the tragedy of Western civilization, unless the European democracies are prepared to face the problem now. There are many ways of tackling it. 'Talking pretty' to dictators is not one of them.



## IS THERE A BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AXIS ?

BY J. R. GLORNEY BOLTON

ON August 13, 1930, some ninety or a hundred thousand people left Montreal by way of the St. Lawrence bridge for the inaccessible airport of St. Hubert's. The R.100, first British airship to fly to Canada, was about to begin her return transatlantic trip. A roar of cheering assailed her as she left the mooring-mast. She circled above Mount Royal, and the air jazzed with sirens and hooters. A later salvo of sirens and hooters marked the salutations of Three Rivers. At midnight a cascade of French and English voices echoed from the Heights of Abraham : a tribute from the unconquered dominion of New France. But dawn broke upon harsh crags and shapeless rocks. A lighthouse, the crumbled remains of a fisherman's cottage, a tramp forging her way towards Belle Isle fractured the solitude. The land is frigid with solitude. Beyond the crests of Labrador and Newfoundland a listless procession of icebergs glides southwards.

At a third dawn the airship was sailing majestically up the Bristol Channel. Her passengers saw the spire of St. Mary's Redcliffe, the stone residences of Cirencester, Blenheim, Stowe. Her shadow brushed the England of the eighteenth century. There were decorous greetings from families and retainers who stood on well-mown lawns. Ninety or a hundred thousand Montrealers might bid the airship farewell at St. Hubert's. Ninety or a hundred people watched her arrival at Cardington. English newspapers were not unduly impressed by a flight which narrowed the long distance between the Mother Country and her greatest Dominion. There was a test match on.

A year later, nothing, it seemed, would save the expensive industry of airship-building, except the financial co-operation of Canada. And there were signs that Canada was not unwilling to assist. Already she had spent some three hundred thousand

pounds upon the airport of St. Hubert's. She erected the slender and exceedingly costly mooring-mast. The cheering Montrealers seemed to represent the voice of Canada. But the politicians had kept the R.100 waiting, week after week, in her hangar at Cardington while they fought a critical and epoch-making general election. The granaries of the West were filled with grain which no country could afford to buy. The workers of the industrial East were thrown into unemployment, and the farmers of the West were starving. The prestige of the Liberal Government was broken. Mr. R. B. Bennett, idol of Calgary, attributed more than half the country's misfortunes to Mr. Mackenzie King's eagerness to be a good internationalist. The United States, he told the industrial East, planted the seeds of industrial greatness during the Napoleonic Wars, and now, in a new era of depression, Canada should plant the seeds of her own industrial greatness. She should lean neither upon Great Britain nor upon the United States. The industrial East should work in complete harmony with the agricultural West. The Dominion was, as far as possible, to be self-contained. With the slogan of "Canada First" Mr. Bennett inflicted a heavy defeat upon the Liberals. "Canada first" was not the battle-cry of an Empire-conscious country. Meanwhile, over here, the Labour Government had given place to a National dispensation. The R.100, proud pioneer airship, was sold for scrap, and the 1931 crisis showed that the temper of "Imperial" Britain was still insular.

\* \* \* \* \*

"We must think imperially, or perish." In the summer of 1932 there went to Canada not an airship, but a delegation composed of some of the leading members of the new National Government. There went also delegates from the other Dominions and the High Commissioner for India. Between the fall of the Socialist Government in Great Britain and the Imperial excursion to Canada, there occurred the epoch-making Japanese intrusion into Manchuria. It was epoch-making because it showed conclusively that henceforward the dangers to Imperial security might be as great in the Far East as in Europe and the Mediterranean. A new sea-power was actively pursuing an aggressive policy. The change between a pre-war



epoch when naval rivals, all of them European, could be denied access to the overseas world and the new epoch in which two great naval Powers, operating outside Europe, "lie strategically on flank and rear of British trade routes and empire" has been well and forcibly illustrated in a paper by Professor H. N. Fieldhouse, published in the May-June issue of the *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*.

"It is too much to hope that in any future European struggle Britain will be able to reckon on the friendship of both the great extra-European naval Powers, and it is only too likely that she will be faced with the hostility of one and be the object of, shall we say, the benevolent distrust of the other. The hostility of either or both Japan and the United States would paralyse historic British strategy, for it would make it impossible for Britain to bring the whole pressure of her naval power to bear upon her European enemy."

In the summer of 1932, however, the delegates from Great Britain and the Dominions were not thinking primarily of the problems of Imperial defence or strategy, for public opinion—in advance of which it is scarcely possible for a statesman to move—was obsessed with the immediate problems of a terrible economic depression. The delegates reached a country ready for desperate remedies. Wheat could not command a price. Farmers were trekking to overburdened towns. Canada, when she looked southwards, saw only a dejected Republic. The remittances which used to flow from the three million Canadians resident in the United States ceased abruptly. So also did the flow of capital. The Ottawa Conference acquired, throughout the North American Continent, an enormous importance. In the vestibule of the Château Laurier the bust of Sir Wilfred Laurier gazed upon the most cosmopolitan crowd assembled in North America since the Washington Naval Conference. It gazed also upon the huge globe, liberally splashed with red, which stood at the entrance to the Château.

Disraeli had declared that Ottawa would one day become the capital of the British Empire. But Ottawa lacks the atmosphere of a capital. It lacks even the atmosphere of French-speaking Montreal. A provincial setting emphasized the differences within the cosmopolitan crowd. They did not look as though they were members of one family. Mr. de Valera, returned at last to power, had sent Mr. Sean O'Kelly, who did not intend to be accommodating. Australian and New Zealand delegates

were busily attributing their unbalanced trade returns to Great Britain's departure from the Gold Standard. The chief delegate for South Africa, a country necessarily sensitive to the fortunes of gold, was Mr. W. Havenga, who, as a lad of fourteen, defended his father's homestead against British fire. He brought bitter memories of boyhood life in a concentration camp. Canada herself was a hostess without friendliness, for she was complaining loudly that a recent commercial treaty between Great Britain and the Argentine dethroned the Calgary dynasty of cattle kings; and Calgary once marked the centre of Mr. Bennett's political support.

The depression deepened, and the men from the West decided to translate their despair into action. Dominion status or no Dominion status, they would march upon Ottawa and reach the capital before the British statesmen went home. Their near approach caused consternation in Ottawa. A crowd gathered round the huge globe splashed with red. What did the British statesmen think? What did Mr. Baldwin think? The homely Englishman—inheritor of Disraeli's party leadership—lit his pipe, lounged on the grass and watched a cricket-match. The problem was one for Mr. Bennett to solve.

As soon as the marchers reached the suburbs, Mr. Bennett called out the mounted police. The action was neither heroic nor spectacular. From that moment the Canadian Prime Minister ceased to be the country's leader. Alberta forsook him for the desperate eccentricities of social credit. The Dominion was ready to return to the well-worn international co-operation of Mr. Mackenzie King who, like his predecessors, maintained an equipoise between the interests of the United States and the interests of Great Britain, between the pull of geography and the pull of sentiment. There could be no long-sustained policy of "Canada first" for a country whose commodities far outstrip her home markets. In a chastened mood, therefore, she concluded her agreements with the Mother Country, with the other Dominions, and with India. She gave to Australia and New Zealand more than they had anticipated. Great Britain had just drawn the curtain across her former idol, Free Trade. In the stress of crisis few of her leading men observed that each overture to the Empire meant a fatal



restriction upon Europe. Ottawa hastened Herr Hitler's advent to power. Ottawa hurried on Signor Mussolini's plans for an Ethiopian conquest. Canada had tried to live without the United States and Great Britain; and Great Britain was trying to live without Europe. Great Britain has repented. So has Australia. The arrival of her trade delegates in London at the end of April, 1938, was an admission that she wished to make drastic changes in her Ottawa agreements. Australia knows that the markets comprised by the British Commonwealth are not sufficient for her wares.

At the moment, moreover, Australia is deeply perplexed by the problems of British foreign policy. She spends more for each head of her population on armaments and defence than any of the other Dominions. She has in Mr. Stanley Bruce a High Commissioner who is in every way qualified to assume the duties of a Minister for Imperial Defence. But Imperial Defence depends as much upon policy as upon strategy. Just as a successful Ottawa policy in economics was conditioned by the will to live within a self-contained Commonwealth, so an invincible programme for Imperial Defence is conditioned by a common direction in foreign affairs. No one who has followed the activities of the Dominions since the Ottawa Conference can seriously maintain that such a common direction exists. Geography, indeed, is once more in conflict with sentiment. For while Australia, New Zealand and South Africa recognize the paramount importance of keeping open the Imperial route through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, Canada is fortified behind a wealthy neighbour anxious to impose the Monroe doctrine upon the entire North American Continent. Whenever President Roosevelt makes one of his spectacular visits to Montreal or Quebec he hopes to strengthen the chances that, in the event of the Greater War—whether fought in Europe or the Pacific, the foreign policy of Canada will harmonize with the foreign policy of the United States. When an Englishman looks at the map of the world, he readily admits the importance of maintaining the Imperial route through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. When a Canadian looks at the map he decides that Ottawa—or, rather, some city like Winnipeg or Regina—is in fact the centre of the British Commonwealth;

that the future rests with the country which has both an Atlantic and a Pacific sea-board; that, whether or not the Mediterranean has become a closed Italian Lake, a Commonwealth whose chief communications radiate from Canada could after all, survive the shock of Mediterranean defeat. And there is the strongest temptation to forget that in the end these communications would radiate not from Canada, but from the United States. Such an attitude naturally fosters complacency, for Canada can survive, whether or not Germany establishes her supremacy in Europe and Italy is mistress both of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. For the other Dominions there cannot be the same complacency. There cannot be complacency at all.

These distinguishing reactions to the World Crisis have been strikingly illustrated in Geneva. Canada regards herself as a good and conscientious member of the League of Nations. She sends a full delegation to Geneva. Membership enhances her international status. She flaunts a privilege in which her powerful neighbour does not partake. Yet, for all the show and faithful obligations, Canadian statesmen do not make the decisive speeches. Ostentation goes hand in hand with circumspection. Mr. Mackenzie King says nothing which might cause offence at the White House. Contrast his speech at the 1936 Assembly, when Italy was demanding the expulsion of the Ethiopian delegates, with the speech delivered by Mr. W. J. Jordan, the New Zealand delegate. For while Mr. Mackenzie King committed himself to nothing, Mr. Jordan stood boldly for collective security. Mr. Jordan had already matched his words with action, for in the committee appointed to consider the Ethiopian claims to continued membership of the League, he cut through all the subtleties and uncertainties of Mr. Eden and M. Delbos. Italy was the aggressor, he argued, and to eject the Ethiopian delegates was to condone the victimization of their country. So the Ethiopian delegates sat undisturbed throughout the Assembly. They dared not speak. But Count Ciano's baggage remained in Rome unpacked.

Mr. Jordan, representative of a Socialist Government in New Zealand, did not want the aggressors to have their way. Nor did Australia nor South Africa. Nor did Congress India. But



no harsh words of regret enlivened the speech of the Aga Khan, for he belonged to a delegation whose orders, in the last resort, came from Whitehall. The Indian delegation is, unofficially, the second delegation from Great Britain. India's membership of the League of Nations is a sham, and until she has a Foreign Minister responsible to her own Legislature it will remain so. Mr. Jordan's idealistic attitude was, of course, prompted by his country's geographical position. A New Zealander or an Australian looks at a map of the World very differently from the Englishman or the Canadian. For the New Zealander and the Australian the Red Sea looms larger than the Mediterranean, for the sufficient reason that it is nearer his own country. It is his gateway to the West. He saw at once the evil potentialities of the Ethiopian campaign. For if the Ethiopian conquest led to the Italian East Empire, Libya could lead to Egypt and the Suez Canal. Italian patronage of Islam might succeed in separating the Hejaz from Nejd and so convert the Red Sea into a closed Italian Lake. When this happens it scarcely matters whether Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus are still British possessions, held in bondage, perhaps, against the wishes of their inhabitants.

New Zealand, Australia and South Africa saw the Italian menace clearly, and the terms of the recent Anglo-Italian agreement are the measure of their fears. Not only does Great Britain prepare to recognize the new Italian Empire; she is providing ample facilities for Italian residence in the Aden Protectorate. Aden, in other words, is to remain the chief distributing centre for Ethiopian goods. Italian penetration into Aden, however unwelcome, is to prevent the development of a rival port on Italian soil. We have promised with Italy not to intervene separately in the affairs of Sau'di Arabia or to take advantage of any conflict between Sau'di Arabia and the fanatical Yemen. Perhaps—it was worth the risk of serious complications in Spain, and the sacrifice of so much Italian youth for cannon-fodder, to wrest from Great Britain so favourable an agreement in the Red Sea. Perhaps—Great Britain is glad that a successful sanctionist policy did not hurl a defeated Fascist dictator to a Roman mob. Solomon is not Augustus. The Negus may leave the Assembly, but Great Britain has

already arranged that a grateful Pharaoh shall take his place. For the moment the Anglo-Italian agreement has eased an ugly situation. When the agreement, not yet put into operation, is broken, the decks will be cleared to decide which Power is to be supreme in the Red Sea. No wonder Mr. Jordan acted with resolution in Geneva.

But Italy is not the only Power threatening the might and majesty of the British Empire. Opinion in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa is divided over Japan, very much as opinion in Great Britain is divided over Germany. Japan is the potential enemy. Public opinion, nevertheless, wishes to postpone the struggle and to divert Japanese attention from their own quarter of the globe. Left to themselves, Australians and New Zealanders have little doubt that this could be done. But Great Britain is for ever introducing new complications. Relations between London and Tokyo were strained every time an official was wounded or a British ship was sunk. It is not unlikely that Japan will aggravate the residents of Hong Kong before the end of the year, and, if the status of a British Colony is threatened—albeit a Colony founded before Japan or China became, in the modern sense, Great Powers—the dangers of war between Great Britain and Japan will have multiplied. Hong Kong, so the Australian argues, is not worth a World War. He sees, moreover, that the chances of victory are slender. For even with a completed Singapore base the Grand Fleet cannot operate in the Pacific so long as there is the fear of naval action in the North Sea and the Mediterranean.

This explains the paradox in the policy of the Pacific Dominions: the determination to keep the Red Sea and the Mediterranean open and the anxiety to avoid trouble in the Pacific: firmness towards Italy and conciliation towards Japan. It is a policy dictated by Geography.

But India adds a remoter complication. To-day India is Nationalist. To-morrow, when she has forgotten Mahatma Gandhi, she will be Imperialist. Italy was nationalist in the nineteenth Century. To-day she is Imperialist. Expansion is a law of life. Already the seeds of Indian Imperialism are sown. Something deeper than the logic of their transplanted Gladstonian Liberalism made Congressmen oppose the separa-



tion of Burma from India, for India has battered upon Burma. India has a surplus population. Some hundreds of thousands of Indians live in Mauritius, Trinidad, British Guiana and Natal. In each of these countries there are more Indians than there are Englishmen in India. Indians discuss the waste spaces of semi-tropical Northern Australia just as keenly as the people of the Far East. More than once the Government of India has protested against the Union Government's treatment of Indians in South Africa. The nearer Federal India approaches Dominion status, the more vocal will become her resentment against the anti-Asiatic legislation both of the Antipodes and the New World. Her British masters have already taught her how to conduct successful expansionist campaigns from an Indian base. India knows that the white man will never fully colonize Australia. The natural destiny of Australia is to be Eurasian.

So colour assumes an importance which is little understood in Europe. In his *Credo* on British Race Patriotism, Lord Milner argued that India could find no lawful place among the sister Dominions. But without India the British Commonwealth is neither populous nor Asiatic—nor, fundamentally, cosmopolitan. Australia would like to find strength and sustenance nearer than the British Isles. She would like to find it in Canada, who shares her distrust of colour and whose attitude to Japan, like her own, is one of conciliation tempered by profound suspicion. The population of Canada is increasing, whereas the population of Great Britain seems to be doomed to a serious shrinkage. But Canada's chances of becoming the predominant partner in a British Commonwealth do not destroy her geographical dependence upon the United States. One factor alone can successfully overcome geography, and that is race galvanized by religion. Race and religion can make an effective barrier between Northern Ireland and Eire. Race and religion can make the one effective barrier between Canada and the United States, even between the ultramontane of Quebec and the Liberal-minded Catholic of New York, Boston or Philadelphia, who is vaguely apprehensive lest some of his Peter's Pence were loaned for the Ethiopian campaign. The *Canadiens* have repudiated their Mother Country, Republican, anti-clerical,

fundamentally free. Why should they hesitate to repudiate the British association when, in the distant future, repudiation may suit their purpose ? Lord Milner, when he elaborated his British Race Patriotism, under-rated the *Canadien*, the Boer, the Maori and the Celt. Cecil Rhodes placed among his life's aims " the recovery of the United States." Australia, frustrated by the *Canadien*, may yet look for the protection of the American. Thus Washington, and not Ottawa, may yet become in some mysterious way the capital of the British Empire.

In other words, the future of the British Empire is one of far-reaching changes and fundamental uncertainties. For this very reason the Empire is profoundly pacifist. If the Dominions tended to range themselves against Great Britain in the Ethiopian campaign, it was because they did not take sufficiently into account the fact that Nazi Germany was ready to aid the aggressor. They are far removed from the German menace. Locarno had little meaning for them. They are a drag in a bold policy towards Germany and Japan. In a British Commonwealth of Nations Chamberlain cannot play Palmerston.

Herr Hitler learned a valuable lesson when he sent a small handful of troops into the Rhineland, and the mighty Army of Republican France, though concentrated in Lorraine, did not march. That lesson is underlined by the Anglo-Italian agreement, which, so long as it remains in force, allays the suspicions of the British Dominions. The lesson is that Nazi Germany is free to do what she will in Eastern Europe. So long as the future of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary or Rumania is at stake, the Dominions will not want to come to the assistance of Great Britain, and without the Dominions Great Britain is scarcely a first-class Power. The Dominions invite a second Bismarck—one who has taken Potsdam and Schoenbrunn in his stride—to establish a German ascendancy in Europe which may last for at least a century. Why should *they* be perturbed ? Great Britain and Eire are the only European members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and they inhabit the island fringe of Europe. Greater Germany—unlike the Empire of Boers, *Canadiens* and Englishmen—is founded upon the intelligible principle of racial solidarity.



Unfortunately for Herr Hitler, he has forgotten Bismarck's dislike of colonies. He appears to forget even Bismarck's doctrine of limited aims. The man who has achieved so much without recourse to war ignores the fact that, among the subjects of the British King, there are many who think that the retention of Hong Kong, perhaps, even of Gibraltar, can be more trouble than it is worth—and demands colonies. In so far as they would take time to "Nazify," develop and protect, colonies would be an insurance against an immediate war. But the return of the Colonies would awaken old suspicions throughout the Empire. It would check separatist tendencies. The man who has created Greater Germany may lose everything by seeking the chimerical advantage of a Colonial Empire. Like Louis XIV. and Napoleon, he may see his work undone in his own life-time. Separatism is not sluggishness. Circumspection is not timidity. The soldiers of the Empire will fight again if they are made to believe that their own Dominion is in danger. Goldwin Smith convinced himself that Canadians would never come to the aid of the Mother Country in time of war. Vimy Ridge showed that he was wrong. It is foolish for Englishmen to take for granted the might and majesty of the British Empire. It is just as foolish for the foreigner to assume that the might and majesty of the British Empire no longer exist. And for the aggressor such an assumption is suicidal.

## POLITICS AND THE ENGLISH NOVEL

BY V. S. PRITCHETT

THE improper, festive and civilized twenties have gone, and with them has gone the flagellant voice of D. H. Lawrence whose whippings gave them so much stimulus. What would he have said and done if he had lived on into our dour and strident age of faith? It is useless to speculate. Both of the feverish sects which now scream for possession of Europe lay claim to him, and it seems improbable that he would have cared very much for either. Need we care? Must we (as the energetic politicals are always asserting, like the same gramophone record being put on again and again), make a choice? Not as citizens I mean, but as novelists. Have we to write what are called "political" novels?

It will be news, of course, to the great dope public of the best-sellers that such a thing as a 'political' novel has been at all discussed or written. A couple of decades always pass before the great public becomes aware of what the younger novelists of any period are saying. And, indeed, there is something grim for the library reader in the reflection that any novelist ever "says" anything; that pill has got to be well sugared if they are going to take it. Yet when I think of the changes, good and bad, that are coming over the English novel, I am reminded of that vast output of philanthropical and missionary fiction of the last century and I can foresee an orgy of fundamentally similar propaganda and uplift. The good poor man, the wicked rich man, the tired sweet factory girl and the fat-ankled bridge-playing lady, are coming into their own. They are here already. Stacks of this kind of manuscript are piled on every publishers' table, waiting for the sudden best-seller that will release the humanitarian flood.

This is not—and I hope it never will be—any concern of mine. The more difficult question for the novelist who thinks



about his job and its relation to the society which he is attempting to portray, is how far this new political impulse is to be allowed to influence *him*. For the English novelist, let me say, there seems at first to be something artificial about the political subject. Politics wax and wane, but man goes on. And there is little or no political tradition in the English novel. There was Swift—but he was an Irishman. There was Disraeli—but he was a Jew. Meredith wrote leaders for a provincial paper, but there is no evidence that he gave them any importance. The attempt to show that Dickens was an unconscious Marxist, is a confusion of politics with philanthropy. George Eliot—due for a revival—is aware of the industrial revolution, and Thackeray pokes fun at brewers getting into the county, but that is hardly evangelical sociology or politics. The English novel, if it can be said to begin with Defoe, dates from long after the only English revolution; it has thus become almost entirely a sociable thing, concerned with leisure rather than work, the amenities and acerbities of company and private life, rather than with public clashes. There can have been no greater threat to English society than the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars, yet it was left to the pamphleteers, the historians and the poets, to respond to this threat. The novelists did nothing. A glance at French literature shows up the almost startling English silence. An aside or two on the social question, and that is all.

In almost the only piece of Communist criticism to show any understanding or love of English letters, Ralph Fox's *The Novel and the People*, it was pointed out with some plausibility that the English novel had lost a great deal by this abstinence. The characters of English fiction had lost an epic quality because they were seen as part of Barchester and not as part of the historical process of society. *Wuthering Heights* was, if I remember rightly, the nearest thing we had to the epical—but that, alas, showed no trace of history dialectically regarded! Mr. Fox was driven to quote one of the more chastened passages of Engels in order to tell us what everyone knows, that a writer is a child of his time and that the processes of creation are mysterious. It is a pity, certainly, that we have no Turgenev, Zola or Flaubert and that we left Napoleon to

Tolstoy and Erckmann-Chatrion ; we can reflect only that we probably owe this deficiency less to lack of political or historical sense than to the fact that we were not invaded. Our tolerance of appalling social evils is due to hundreds of years of peace. We had people who were supposed to look after such things and we did not suppose that a novelist's political analysis of society was a necessary preliminary to their job. Moreover, as a sociable people, where others started revolutions we started new religions which, in fact, have canalized the whole story of the English social struggle.

This is the background into which the English novelist naturally retired when it was suggested that he should break with tradition and become political. There were, he was bound to admit, good reasons now for the political subject. Fascism, throughout Europe, was persecuting the intellect. Communism was persecuting the middle classes which most notably produced it. Both sides preferred propaganda to literature. But fascism was avowedly barren intellectually *cf.* the obiter dicta of Goebbels and Hitler on art in general, not to mention the fervent speeches of Franco's Generals, Millan Astray, for example—and offered merely an emotional outlet, whose final glory was to be modern war ; whereas communism, though it had not much use for the intellectuals—it is trying to make up to them now—at least offered a new theory of humanitarianism and the promise of a new popular art.

It is not surprising that the general drift has been to the Left. And the possibilities of invasion, *i.e.*, air warfare turned the question of the kind of society which makes that possible, an urgent one to the English novelist. Left-wing writers and politicians have been derided for saying that the Spanish war is "our battle" or that Czecho-slovakia's security is "ours" ; but even if it be an exaggeration in terms of ideas to say that an attack on democracy anywhere is an attack on our own, it is undoubtedly not an exaggeration in terms of things, for the danger to our social structure under air warfare and among nations which have aggressive political philosophies, is exactly that of the Czechs and of the Spaniards of Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona. When English novelists, however, have turned from the exotic events of the Continent to the



English scene, they have been shocked to see how little there is of the dramatic to entice them. There was unemployment, there was malnutrition and misery, but the sufferers were docile. There was no sign of revolution. Yet the effect of a new dogma is to make things seem dramatic. The result has been that those novelists who have swallowed the Marxist dose at one gulp, have got the fixed stare of the dyspeptic, and have written a drama in unreal terms upon the mumbling greyness of English life. Being unfamiliar with the working-class, they have done an idealized portrait of them as plain-spoken emancipated heroes, while the middle class characters—*vide* Marx—are decadent and futile. If these novelists are liberals they are ashamed of their liberalism and, by inverted snobbery, they now long to get into the proletariat just as they used to long to get into the county.

Now, one does not doubt that there are characters in contemporary society like this, but the wretches are presented not as people but as arguments. Loose talk about classes has removed from the indoctrinated novelist the faculty to portray human nature which is the main reason for his trade. The effect of Marxist or near-Marxist dogma—which is, of course, a valuable aid to social analysis—upon working-class writers is not, on the whole, less disastrous. The working-class writer, by the nature of his new profession, very soon becomes a bourgeois; most of these writers indeed are really not working-class at all, but *petit bourgeois*; and one has the spectacle of men who become more and more “bourgeois” everyday talking about “popular art.” But there is another even more fatal weakness to these propagandist novels. They are concerned with wishes; and they show these wishes either as actually fulfilled in some hypothetical revolution or assume that they are on the way to being fulfilled. Moreover, in a definite way. But since we do not know the future, we can speak of nothing as inevitable; and even if we can speak of events as likely, we cannot define in what way they will come about. There has always been something *voulu* and creaking in this New Country stuff.

For the novelist the world of the future is not a subject for realism or argument but for fantasy; and for speculation which must tacitly admit its own waywardness. Nothing robs

fantasy of its effect so much as the assertion that the future will justify it. But this is merely to repeat the earlier criticism, that instinct and reason reject all talk of inevitability. The only time to be wise about the event is after it. And so, though I admired part of Mr. Rex Warner's *Wild Goose Chase* very much and look upon him as one of the most promising of the propagandist novelists, I respect more the judgment of Mr. Upward in *Over the Border*. For he observed an important psychological fact—which it is the novelist's business to do—when he made his fussy little intellectual hero realize that the famous New Country over the border, the promised land and its accompanying fight for freedom and so on, is as yet nothing but a day-dream. Even more, a private nightmare or war game. It is merely a state of mind.

Propaganda must occupy itself with the future ; but I think that politically-minded novelists who cannot see the wood for the trees in the contemporary scene and who have understood the danger of putting their story into an ideological strait-jacket, would be well advised to write fables or to go to the past. Moreover failure and tragedy are always more convincing as argument and literature than success. This is not true, of course, of books on the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* level, but if a novelist believes that he has some duty in the task of saving the world from barbarism, he must refrain from literary barbarity. *Candide* is one of the most revolutionary books in the world and one which fired the imagination of all people who believed in the possibility of a better society—but its characters are comi-tragic wrecks at the end. The greatest argument for idealism is *Don Quixote*—which described its hopeless failure. And Wells, in our own time has always been better and more effective in describing things as they are than things to come. As for the past, the advantage there is that we know the past's future. We know what happened in the end. We know the limits of human nature, the importance of imponderables. The stage is set, the characters are provided. Here is a chance for the politically-minded novelist to redeem neglected episodes in the struggle of the classes.

A number of distinguished English novelists have not been led by the political impulse into any of the foregoing channels.



They have remained observers of their society knowing that as their society is, so they will be ; and that the more closely and comprehensively they observe it, the better their material will be. This does not necessarily mean observing all classes of society. In the long run a novelist can do well only what he knows from his own roots. It is obvious that Henry James, for all his æstheticism, was profoundly aware of his world. He knew its most exquisite achievements and also its corruptions, for good and evil do not reside in opposite camps, but in the same object. To novelists who have this more mature disposition political criticism has meant an amplifying of their world. The great contribution has been to untangle excessive introversion and to bring not those vague generalities "the masses" and "humanity" but the common man to the novel. We have moved from the drawing-room to the street, from the lane to the main road. There has been a new process of documentation ; and for those who want naturalism and for those who want more than that, this is an indispensable step. For the absolutes of Marx have been too drastic. In the anxiety to protect us from fascism, for example, the lives of the kind of people who become "fascists"—if one must use that ineptly shirty word—have been neglected by novelists. The appearance of vernacular speech in the novel comes from the self-consciousness of the lower middle class ; and their irrationalities, their romanticism their individualism and their dangerous feeling of isolation—the strange, stunned life of bungaloid England—remains to be written. And so, too, does that other political theme of our time—the contemporary English version of Turgenev's *Rudin* ; the intellectual denied a place in his society, reduced to futility, all promise and brilliance but no performance, who dies on a foreign barricade for a cause not his own. There is nothing like the political impulse for starting a crusade and missing the real political subject ! And I doubt whether any political novel of the first order will be written until the period of faith passes and the disillusion of the crusaders sets in.

## THE ATTACK ON THE PRESIDENCY

By D. W. BROGAN

“**T**HE power of the crown has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished.” I am quoting Dunning’s famous resolution from memory, but the text is near enough for my purposes. And in this session of Congress there has been passed a series of comparable resolutions, directed not only against President Roosevelt, but against President Anybody. “On the Hill,” that is in the Capitol, senators and congressmen are increasingly in revolt, not merely against their party leader, but against the whole idea of subordination to the executive which has dominated political thinking in America since 1933. And so it happens that in a little over a year since his unprecedented triumph, Mr. Roosevelt has failed to get any serious part of his legislative programme enacted into law, and a legislator has only to vote against an administration bill to acquire the stature of a new Cato—with the added advantage that the modern Cato is not defending any conquered cause.

How are we to account for this collapse of a political power that even a year ago seemed so deeply entrenched? The most acute of foreign observers of the American scene gave as a reason, when I put the question to him, that the American people were getting bored with the president, with his smile, with his voice; for six years he had been the whole show; now the nation, while it did not as yet want a change, did want a little relief. And, no doubt, after a series of humorous, dramatic and occasionally tragic monologues, the audience was ready for light relief, a ballet of senators or some Ritz or Marx Brothers stuff from the lower house. After all, even in modern America, the “Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days” are still on the job, and each day makes Mr. Roosevelt a more familiar figure and breeds—not contempt but boredom. So it has come about that a Congress, the vast majority of whose members owe a great



deal—and possibly a clear majority owe everything—to the Roosevelt magic, has revolted, has kicked out administration measures, has broken all the bonds of party discipline and, asked by the party leader to help him to carry out reforms of greater or less importance, has replied by saving the republic from the menace of dictatorship.

There is a sense in which President Roosevelt has been a dictator in the past; in the first “hundred days” of his administration he was a dictator in the old Roman sense, and his immense popularity and prestige ensured that, even when the first emergency had passed, the wishes of the President even if they had not the force of law, were soon given it by a loyal (or, as some said, subservient) Congress. But the recent scare over dictatorship has raised the issue in a newer and more fantastic form. It is not merely that Congress is not giving blanket powers over the social and economic life of the nation, but that measures of no profound importance are being fought and defeated as being the thin edge of a wedge—whose thick edge is no Roman institution, or if it is, one that recalls modern more than ancient Rome. It is not President Roosevelt, asserting in peace an authority which tradition if not law gives to a president in war time, that excites alarm. It is the menace of “fascism”, the danger that Mr. Roosevelt or a successor will not be content to be the heir of Jefferson or Wilson, but will ape the manners and methods of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin.

This terror of dictatorship, or rather of totalitarianism, is in many cases quite genuine. It was greatly stimulated by the attack on the Supreme Court last year and not soothed by the formal defeat of the president’s proposal. Perhaps the realization that, even without the presidential reform, the Court could not be relied on to save or restore the good days and ways of Calvin Coolidge, prevented the victory of the opposition from being as consoling as might have been expected. However that may be, the alarm bell in the night which rang for the long weeks of the hearings before the Senate committee last Spring, has never ceased from its clamour. Many willing hands have grasped the rope, but if it is permissible to signal out any pair, the honour for the most vigorous and terrifying bell-playing must go to Miss Dorothy Thompson (Mrs. Sinclair Lewis).

Witness of the death of Weimar Germany, specialist "in the mortality of Republics," Miss Thompson has observed every act of the man in the White House from her conning-tower in the *New York Herald-Tribune*. The hosts of Midian in the form of potential storm troopers, Ogpu agents, castor-oil squads have never ceased from prowling. No doubt, many of the readers of this persistent polemic enjoy it as in the ancient rhyme

"An' all us other children, when the supper things is done  
 We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun  
 A- list'nin to the witch-tales 'at Annie tells about,  
 An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you  
       Ef you  
       Don't  
       Watch  
       Out!"

Thanks to these and other warnings Congress is alive to the Goblin danger, and not one will be let across the threshold, even if he comes disguised as Senator Burke.

Many examples of this witch-fever could be given. But the most striking was the defeat of the re-organization bill. This measure did not seem, to the outsider, a Trojan horse from whose interior Goering or Vyshinsky was liable to pop out at any moment. The executive agencies of the federal government make a luxurious jungle of boards, agencies and commissions, some on their own, some responsible only to the president (if to him) or to Congress or to both. Some are lumped together under the nominal authority of great departments, notably under the Secretary of the Interior. Both for economy and efficiency it has long been evident that something *must* be done. Of course, "must" in this connection does not mean must; it only means highly desirable, and a year ago almost everybody agreed that it was highly desirable. A committee of academic and other experts had laboured on the scheme, the powers asked for would undoubtedly have been given with hardly a murmur in 1937—and were, in fact, nearly given to President Hoover at a time when his political authority had reached a far lower ebb than Mr. Roosevelt's has. Yet the bill, even after serious and, as some thought, emasculating amendment, was only narrowly passed in the Senate and was narrowly defeated in the House of Representatives—in a body in which the official opposition numbers less than a fourth of the membership! That the defeat



should have come in the lower house is itself of special significance, for all of that house has to face the electors in November of this year—and a majority was apparently willing to face it, having defeated an important administration proposal—and having in effect defeated it on the grounds of lack of confidence in the president. And the grounds of that want of confidence are in their turn significant; the officer whose request for authority to reorganize the executive departments of which he is the head was defeated is nominally the president, but the officer really defeated was one unknown to law, a “dictator.”

It was amid cries of “dictatorship” and indignant rebuttals, affirming that Mr. Roosevelt was not and did not want to be a dictator, that the technical proposals about the nature of government audit or the proper authority to supervise federal educational activities were debated. Mr. Roosevelt himself took a hand and sent a letter disclaiming any dictatorial intentions. That the president should have done this was very odd, as an important editor pointed out to me, but it was no odder than the whole atmosphere of the debate. The comic side of the fight reached its height in the invasion of Washington by the “Paul Reveres” from Boston. The original Paul Revere (it will not be remembered) rode out from Boston to warn the embattled farmers in “every Middlesex village and farm” that the British were coming. Longfellow assures us that “the fate of a nation was riding that night”, and it is possible that all the actors in this charade, and even many of the spectators, were convinced that it was riding in Washington this April, but the foreigner can only regard the panic as in itself a symptom of some serious disturbance of the public mind.

The fear of dictatorship has, of course, genuine roots. The dictatorships are profoundly unpopular in America. Messrs. Hitler and Mussolini have friends in high or opulent places as well as support from German-American and Italian-American groups, but the American Lord Londonderrys and Lord Lothians are politically impotent. A growing disgust with Europe, its men and methods, is affecting American judgment of what are called the “great western democracies”, but if France and Britain are increasingly distrusted, it is because they are thought of as being more or less willing accomplices of the dictators. A

patriotic song bids the American "look over the sea, be happy you're in God's country," and goes on to boast that "We got no Mussolini, got no Mosley. We've got Popeye and Gipsy Rose Lee." The promotion of Sir Oswald to the rank of a symbol worthy of comparison with the Duce is undoubtedly due to the exigencies of rhyme, to the need imposed by the name of that much more attractive figure, Miss Lee, the great strip-tease artist. But if the average American is quite indifferent to the antics of our local *Führer*, he is acutely conscious of the antics of the great original. And he rejoices, to quote from the same song—that he lives in a land "where freedom's greater and every man is his own dictator". It is not without significance that these sentiments occur in a musical show called "Hooray for What?"—and the answer presumably is, "Hooray for That."

Can it seriously be maintained that Mr. Roosevelt is feared as a potential Hitler or that the anarchy of the administrative organization of the government is a safeguard of liberty? It cannot. But it can be maintained with a good deal of plausibility that the American government has been too much a one-man show in recent years and that the habit of looking to one man for relief in all ills is dangerous to the separation of powers, liberty under law and the other sacred principles of American institutional life, which have as hypnotic an effect on the American mind as "honour" has on the German. And the enemies of the President have taken advantage of this emotional set-up to thwart even harmless measures, in order that the office of president may be reduced to something like its normal proportions if not now, then when Mr. Roosevelt has left the White House.

The attitude of the regular party leaders should not be confused with the terrors of the alarmists who see in Mr. Roosevelt another Hitler. The local leaders of the Democratic party have to consider problems of party policy that will affect political life for many years to come. Mr. Roosevelt is in the public eye a far greater figure than any other in public life; this is fully realized by the Democrats, who have refused to follow every lead from the White House. But the party existed and acquired assets and liabilities long before Mr. Roosevelt



was born and, short of some revolutionary upheaval, will continue after he is dead. No one man can command all the party loyalty or all the party assets. After all, Mr. Roosevelt is not going to be president for ever, and if the party is exclusively his, what is going to happen to it when its owner retires? How is it going to be commanded; how is it going to fight elections, if all its programme has been summed up in the personal appeal of one man? True dictatorial *régimes* cannot avoid, sooner or later, the difficult task of finding successors to the God-given leaders, but as long as the leaders live, the problem of succession can be ignored or provided for in *sub rosa* ways. But in the United States the problem of succession is going to be acute in two years from now and the very fact that there is no one in public life with a tithe of the president's prestige makes the problem of a successor all the more pressing for it means that the new president cannot, in the nature of things, fill the public eye as Mr. Roosevelt does. The American people will have to get used to a political stage with more than one actor on it—and the time, some senators think, to accustom the public to the inevitable change is now.

There is, of course, an apparent solution that would postpone the necessity of deflating the presidency. Mr. Roosevelt might run again in 1940. But that solution is only apparent. For to affront the tradition that debars a president from a third term would be an even bolder assault on popular principles (or prejudices) than was the unsuccessful attack on the Supreme Court. If Mr. Roosevelt runs in 1940, the dictatorship cry will have a ring of earnestness and plausibility about it which it now lacks, and what real and permanent enemies Mr. Roosevelt has in his own party will have an issue on which they can fight him, with far more hope of success than they have at present. Mr. Roosevelt has not shown his hand; the possibility that he may run in 1940, if it accounts for some of the opposition that has developed in the past year, also has some disciplinary advantages. Party members in good standing who would like to wrest control of the party from the President wait for so good a chance, and there are, in addition, many persons who gloomily think that if Mr. Roosevelt wants the nomination in 1940 he will get it and will be elected. And few and bold are the spirits who are willin'

in 1938 to quarrel beyond hope of reconciliation with a man who may still be in the White House in 1944 !

But most people do not think that Mr. Roosevelt will run in 1940; they think he will be content to imitate his kinsman in 1908 and choose a successor. It is in the attitude of some regular Democrats to this possibility that the character of much of the opposition to the President is revealed. What many conservative or mildly liberal Democrats assert that they fear, and will oppose, is the forcing on the party of a presidential candidate who owes his whole political position to the president. If in these days of a rehabilitated George III, such a parallel can be asked, the professional politician in the eastern states will revolt against the imposition of a Lord Bute on him. They will take a George Grenville, that is to say a politician who has earned his place in the party by services to it and not merely to the Roosevelt administration. They would accept (if he were eligible) Senator Wagner of New York, but owing to the indiscretion of being born in Germany, Senator Wagner is not available. They will oppose as far as they dare (and if the situation permits they will in 1940 dare a lot) a King's friend like the Solicitor-General, Robert Jackson. They will oppose the intrinsically powerful Secretary of Agriculture, Harry Wallace, on the ground that he is a "Duco Democrat", one of the Republicans who saw the light in 1933. They will oppose for the same reason the combative Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes. They would probably welcome Secretary Hull if his age were not a handicap. But they are reconciled to accepting Mr. A. N. Other, that is to say, a leading Democrat who has not fought the administration, but is not suspected of being a mere "stooge" for Mr. Roosevelt. Where is he to be found? There, alas, is the trouble, for the personal pre-eminence of Mr. Roosevelt in the past six years has been fatal to the growth of lesser reputations. In a period when the President has been little short of God for millions and nothing short of the Devil for millions more, it is hard for Michael or Belial to get their names into the papers. And one advantage, from the long-sighted party man's point of view, in the recent congressional revolts, is that it has given a chance to politicians to emerge from the ruck, either as assailants or defenders of the

Administration. No very dramatic figures have as yet caught the public eye, but the screen test is still on, and a star is not usually made by one picture.

The dislike of a possible Crown Prince named by Mr. Roosevelt and being, at first, the mere political creature of his creator, is extended to many actual or potential "King's Friends." The President's son and secretary, Mr. James Roosevelt, is believed to be very ambitious politically, and his power is jealously regarded by capable persons who have not had the good fortune to be born into a dynasty. The dislike felt by many congressmen for some of the "brain-trusters" is often exaggerated in the press, but it exists all the same. Mr. Ogden Nash has told us, in practically deathless lines, what a

"Super-colossal ball of fire

Was Professor Van Rensselaer Cohen Maguire,"

but congressmen are seldom shrinking violets themselves and, however despicable they may be, do not like being despised too openly even by the brightest young men. Thus in the fight over the Tennessee Valley Authority, in addition to the complex problems of policy and law involved, there was added a good deal of congressional resentment at the high-handed way in which (so congressmen aver) all three rulers of the T.V.A. treated Congress. The triumvirs may not have agreed in anything else, but they were all of the opinion of the cabinet officer reported by Henry Adams that "a Congressman is a hog. You must take a stick and hit him on the snout". There is thus bound up with the congressional revolt against the president, personal and corporate *amour propre*, party interest and, of course, in many cases a genuine dislike of Mr. Roosevelt's programme, for many senators and congressmen were elected along with Mr. Roosevelt who shared very few of his views. And the very blankness of the cheque given in 1936 is an asset to the President's enemies as well as to his friends, for thanks to the separation of powers, both congress and the president have a legal and moral right to try to fill in the blank.

The British reader, used even in the days of 'National' government to the survival of an opposition party, may be surprised that so little attention has been paid to the Republicans in all these calculations. But little attention is paid to them,



not only by the Democrats, but by themselves. As William Allen White has been telling his fellow Republicans, the Grand Old Party has not accustomed itself to the rôle of an opposition, and there is no immediate sign that it is going to be a government. It is one of the paradoxes of the present situation that after a year of internecine war within the party in power, the nominal opposition seems little strengthened. It was good or, at any rate, necessary tactics to allow the dissident Democrats to oppose the president, but that has meant that the laurels of victory, the rewards given by public opinion to men who have deserved well of the Republic, have gone to Democrats, to Senators Wheeler and Burke, to Representative O'Connor. The Republican auxiliaries have been neglected ; their votes and not their voices have been wanted. The last six years ought to have intimidated the most confident prophets, but if no more may be ventured than this, it may be asserted that no one knows whether the Republicans are dead or in a coma. Prophecy may be postponed until November when the voters will have given the prophets some material to work on.

In this analysis of the American situation nothing has yet been said of a force of more immediate interest even to the politicians than the impending elections, the "recession" or slump. To discover in 1938, nearly nine years after the great break of 1929, that the United States is not out of the slough is disconcerting enough. The Administration, hoping for six months that the recession of last Autumn would cure itself, has at last taken the field against the depression by a return to the programme of governmental spending that had been curtailed, partly in panic fear of a boom, partly in a spasm of financial orthodoxy. Yet no one has the old confidence in the "shot in the arm" theory, and as American troubles are largely due to a lack of confidence, the drug may not work because it is not believed in. Politically, Democratic politicians of all complexions are remembering the dire disasters that befall parties in power in bad times. And citizens in general, wondering about the economic future, have had any reviving faith in businessmen as the natural leaders of America shattered by the cumulative revelations of the Whitney case. The New York Stock Exchange should not personify American business or be personified by its ex-president, but the

public does not make fine distinctions and a good deal of skilful rehabilitation of business in the public eye has been wasted since a great symbolic figure of the old order was found out.

In such troubled times, it is not unnatural that there should be talk and more than talk of a "third party", and the La Follette brothers have duly taken the initiative. But it is too early yet to say what future the new party has, and, in all probability, its founders would agree that its future depends largely on what the Democrats do in 1940. If the party veers decisively to the right, then it will lose millions of voters who will be looking for a home. The Progressive party may provide it. But if the Democrats unite on a candidate of whom Mr. Roosevelt can sincerely approve and whom the middle-of-the-road Democrats will swallow, the left-wing voters will do as they did in 1936, vote for the strongest left candidate. And the split, if there is a split, will come from the right; more Democrats than risked it in 1936 will join the Republican remnant in an attempt to build up an opposition party that can carry the war into the enemy's camp, the South. That dream, which seemed in Mr. Hoover's year to be more than a dream, has visited many a bed this year. But the prospects at the moment are not bright. Mr. Roosevelt's candidate in Florida has been triumphant in the senatorial primary, and if, in addition to electing Mr. Pepper, the Roosevelt section in the South can defeat "Cotton Ed" Smith in South Carolina, the old comforting view that in the southern section of the Democracy lay the hope of the stern and unbending Tories will have to be abandoned. The more practically-minded southern statesmen will read the writing on the wall; the more rigid and doctrinaire will resist, but with little hope of success. A conservative party based on Virginia and Vermont is not going to get to first base as an alternative government. If the depression continues and deepens, there may be a great popular wave to right or left; if the economic tide turns, most questions will be postponed until the next crisis. And if Europe goes to war, the American nation will be emotionally and economically involved in ways that cannot now be predicted, but which are certain to have profound effects.

In the meantime, there is a danger that a permanent state of

war between the White House and the Capitol may deprive the United States of effective government at a time when speed and decision may mean safety. The avoidance of a deadlock depends on good temper on both sides. The President has taken his defeats amiably and has disclaimed any intention of seeking reprisals. The victorious parliamentarians will have to remind themselves that in its own sphere the Presidency is as deeply rooted in the hearts of the American people as the Supreme Court and has emotional assets not available to Congress. Hitherto Congress has managed to keep, formally at least, on its side of the fence and to accuse the President of aggression. But if Congress seems to reach out for executive power, or if it gives the President a chance to say 'I could have saved you from this mess but Congress wouldn't let me,' the voters may turn on their present saviours. For the moment, the nation is content that power should be a joy in wider commonalty spread at Washington. But it will be seriously annoyed if that commission is mistranslated and taken to authorize a period of the greatest constitutional propriety accompanied by political and economic impotence.



## POLDER FOLK

BY LILO LINKE

TO the right and left of the road water stood almost motionless in the narrow canals which cut the earth into rectangles, so regular that they appeared inhuman—the shape of things to come. Young trees planted here and there were swallowed up by the vast flatness. Between earth and sky stood only the silhouette of half a dozen farms, too far apart from each other to be linked by the sound of a voice, the dark beams of a draw-bridge, and the outline of a village from which no smoke had ever yet risen—the Wieringermeer, youngest polder of the Netherlands, was still waiting for its population.

It was getting dark when I rode along the main road of Sloodorp, one of the three polder villages. Neat brick-houses for farm-workers and officials, a post-office, a building described in large letters as “Hotel-Café-Restaurant,” three churches—and not a soul about. Only the wind whistling, weird and melancholy, pushing me on to flight across the bridge and past the wreck of a rowing-boat that lay like a bleached skeleton in the middle of a field. It was only when some other cyclists appeared out of the dark, hurrying towards the “old land” like myself, that I felt at ease again.

A Dutch friend smiled when I described my impressions. There was nothing new for him in what I had seen. For hundreds of years the Netherlands have reclaimed land from the sea and thus increased their territory. They like to call it the Dutch form of imperialism, not altogether aware, apparently, that thereby they are disparaging their methods of colonial enterprise.

But even to the Dutch the Wieringermeer is of special importance as the first polder of four to be reclaimed with the perfected technical means of the twentieth century. It constitutes a mere fraction—less than ten per cent.—of the 550,000 acres

that will be won in all by the partial drainage of the Zuiderzee. If all goes according to plan, the total area of the Netherlands will in some twenty-five years' time be enlarged by 7%, the arable area even by 10%. 300,000 people will find their livelihood on soil that was once sea-bottom.

The people who come to settle on the new polderland realize that they are working as pioneers—though they would never dream of saying so. Like the rest of their countrymen, they abhor high-sounding words. Questions are answered in a straightforward manner and with precision, not a word more or less than is necessary; that is their way of dealing with people—and one of the reasons for their dislike of Fascism.

I talked to many of them when I revisited the polder early in 1938. In hardly more than five years a busy community had gathered, farmers, farm-labourers, teachers, parsons, and priests, 3,500 people whose number was still increasing.

They had come from all parts of the Netherlands—from Groningen, Friesland, Drente, Holland, Zeeland, and Brabant. They were Roman Catholics, Hervormd Protestants, or Gereformerd (Calvinists), or belonged to one of the sects which are as numerous in the Netherlands as the windmills. But they all had one thing in common—they were young. It took a long time to find anyone near forty. The "pastoor" (Catholic priest) smiled apologetically when he confessed that he was forty-seven. He had already been working on the polder when it had hardly been drained and felt reluctant to leave the heavy burden of growing responsibilities to someone less experienced.

The only person I heard grumbling was a farm-labourer of fifty, and he admitted himself that he was too old to be transplanted. The Government would never have let him settle here if it had not been for the sake of his eight children, especially his four oldest sons, farm-labourers like himself. At home, in Groningen, they had been unemployed for years. Since they had come to the Wieringermeer five years ago, only one of them had been temporarily laid off. When I asked the father how his sons and daughters felt about their new surroundings, he admitted reluctantly: "Oh yes, they are happy enough here." And there was envy in his voice.

On the whole it is the first year which proves difficult. Even

those used to the flatness of their home-provinces let their eyes pass longingly over the land and fasten them on a young birch or poplar, praying for its growth. After a year the newcomers begin to quiet down. The first crop is harvested, the cow has calved, confidence is growing, one cannot help beginning to take the long view. Laughing a little awkwardly, they point at a nearby shrubbery: "In a hundred years there'll be a wood over there!" Actually, the wood will be there much sooner, but they are less anxious now and do not mind adding a few decades.

The most difficult task is to make new friends. The choice is small. Men from Groningen remain first and foremost men from Groningen and do not get on with "outsiders." A Frisian will only confide in a Frisian. That has always been the case with them as with every true peasant—home ends at the village boundary. Even those who have emigrated to America will not form a Society of the Netherlands there, but a Frisian Club, or a Vereeniging Brabant.

Thus it happens that they all smile in a half embarrassed, half superior way when I ask them whether there is a "Wieringermeer consciousness," a new unity, growing from the mixture of people.

"But the children?"

"Ah, the children—that's a different matter!"

His sharp, lively eyes twinkled behind his pince-nez, and he turned round to the group of about twenty children who were just having their religious lesson.

"Which of you are Frisians?"

A number of hands flew into the air, and half a dozen long-stretched, fair-haired children grinned at us.

"Who is from Groningen?"

Three or four squat, dark-haired boys and girls got up here and there from among the others and looked at us with round, serious faces. The question seemed to have no more meaning to them than the one about their age, because the moment the priest turned to me again, they resumed their seats and began to whisper and giggle with their friends from Friesland, not knowing that that was exactly what the priest had wanted to demonstrate.

He noticed the admiration in my eyes when I looked at the interior of the church. Outside it had appeared gay and



pleasant with its white-washed brick walls, its red tiled roof spreading wide like the wings of a broody hen, its large green door and the dozens of clogs lined up beside it. One might almost have mistaken it for a farm-house if it had not been for the high windows and the cross on the end of the roof.

But here inside I saw at once that it was a place made for worship and quiet meditation. There was peace in the timbered ceiling and the earth-coloured walls, and an air of spaciousness not justified by the real size of the building.

"Your modern architects are great artists," I said to the priest. "They do marvels with a handful of bricks."

He smiled indulgently at the praise of an unbeliever and decided to stick to measurable facts.

"It cost only 11,000 guilders (about £1,200) to build," he said. "If you are interested in architecture, you ought to go and see the one at Sloodorp, too. Soon, I hope, we'll have a third one at Wieringerwerf. Then each of the polder villages will have its own church."

"Are you satisfied with your work here?"

His square-shouldered figure tightened, and he looked straight into my eyes.

"I started with a parish of two and have now to care for about 750 souls, and in the circumstances even that is only a beginning. They are all decent, quiet people and give me no trouble. Those who don't come to church regularly I could count on my ten fingers, and maybe I'd even have some fingers left. But if you'll excuse me now—the children are getting restless."

He took my hand firmly in his and then resumed his lesson, absorbed in it at once and apparently forgetting me even before I had left. From the doorstep I could see the whole of Middenmeer, a row of simple, one-storied buildings following the line of the road. It was a grey windy day with the sun looking down from time to time through the ceiling of clouds, breaking its promise instantaneously by retiring again. A feeling crept over me as if I had been deposited halfway between infinity and nowhere. However much I were paid, I thought, I could not live here, at least not in winter, with that eternal wind brushing earth and sky, sweeping along the dust, depressing image of evanescence.

I turned right and walked towards the drawbridge which held a patch of grey land and grey sky between its grey iron arms, and I followed the canal until I found myself in front of another church. This time it was the Protestant Hervormd one. Like everything else in the Wieringermeer, it was built of bricks with a slender spire that in these flat surroundings appeared very high. A side door was open, and I walked in. For a moment I could not see my way about in the little hall and listened to the mumbling of voices that came from behind a door on the left. Suddenly it opened, and a young man came out into the hall.

"I should like to see the *dominee* (minister)," I said to him. My eyes were getting used to the dim light, and I saw that he was about twenty-six or seven. He was wearing a slightly thread-bare dark suit and a dark tie, and his feet stuck in the heavy boots of a peasant.

"I am the *dominee*. What can I do for you?"

I must have looked rather surprised because he began to laugh. He had only been in Middenmeer for a year and had come here partly because work on the polder tempted him, partly because the appointment had enabled him to marry. He had grown up not far away on the "old land," in North Holland. There was another Hervormd *dominee* working with him who was even a year younger. They got on well together.

I asked him the same questions as the priest, and his answers were the same. With one exception: there were sixty Hervormd souls in Middenmeer, and only about thirty of them came to church on Sundays. Things were better in Sloodorp and Wieringerwerf though they were part of the same parish. The reasons? Psychological, he said and shrugged his shoulders. He showed me the church, as beautiful in its simplicity as the Roman Catholic one, its bareness not depressing as that of the large *kerks* in Dutch towns, and then led me into his class room where the children had made use of his absence to play the harmonium. Laughing excitedly, they rushed back to their seats. Well-fed and well-dressed, they were bubbling over with life. He seemed on excellent terms with them because they were not in the least frightened.

I could not help wondering at this young clergyman. He was so different from the Dutchman whom we meet in the

company of John Bull and Marianne—that fair stocky man with the red cheeks and the thick neck who walks with the sailor's rolling gait and yet possesses all the characteristics of a *petit bourgeois* landlubber. In his appearance he was the perfect embodiment of the Nordic type—tall and slender, with a long finely shaped head, a straight nose, shining yellow hair, and the penetrating blue eyes of someone who was used to looking far into space. It was easier to imagine him at the helm of a ship than preaching from a pulpit. When I told him so, he laughed again, boyish and open-hearted.

“Well, my father and three elder brothers are all sailors, so perhaps it's in our blood. But believe me, I'm happier here.”

He looked it. There was a simple strength flowing from him that convinced more than words, an open-mindedness that seemed able to see the essential, modesty that did not notice hardship, and a sense of humour that laughed at human weakness. And with all that he was more Dutch than the caricature which we have grown to accept as typical.

I did not go to see the third church at Middenmeer—the difference between Hervormd and Gereformeed Protestants is important enough to the Dutch to ask for separate churches even in a village—nor at the other four or five at Slootdorp and Wieringerwerf. Instead I went to visit some of the farms. The polder with its 45,000 acres will eventually provide a livelihood for some 18,000 people. So far only 200 farms have been handed over for cultivation. By 1941 the number will be doubled. The increase is gradual because the soil has to be prepared until the farmer need fear no risk; farm-houses, barns, bridges have to be built, sewage and water-pipes must be laid, and so on. All this work is carried out by the Government, which remains owner of the land and the buildings, and only lets them out on lease.

The farms vary in size between 20 and 100 acres; only a few are as big as 200. According to the quality of the soil the tenants are either specialising on dairy or cereal farming, but there is also a great deal of mixed farming. The lease runs for periods of six years. In 1937 alone the Directie van den Wieringermeer, a State company running the polder, received 720 applications for 57 farms ready to be handed over. The



soil in the polder is fertile, crops have been excellent, the farms are easy to run, the houses offer every modern convenience, and the rent is reasonable—62 guilders (about £6 10s.) per acre during the first two years, 100 guilders during the third and fourth, 135 for each of the following years of tenure. These rents move on a sliding scale with the prices of agricultural products so that the farmer is protected in years of crisis.

To qualify for a farm in the polder, the farmer must possess a minimum capital of 750 guilders per acre, have attended an agricultural class in a Government school, prove to the examiner of the Wieringermeer Directie his experience in farming, be young and energetic, and have the moral qualifications required in the circumstances. The majority are younger sons of farmers in other parts of the country.

The first farm I visited was a dairy farm near Sloodorp. The white-washed walls of the large farm-house and the bright green doors were welcome patches of colour in the drab surroundings. Under one thatched roof were sheltered house and stable, cow-shed and barn. The farmer who answered my knock, a young man in the late twenties, was neither in looks nor in manner recognizable as a countryman. He wore a dark suit and tie like the *dominee*, and when he introduced me to his wife, I was beginning to wonder whether I had made a mistake, because it was quite obvious that this handsome well-dressed girl had never been near a cow in all her life. Later I learnt that the farmers' wives in the polder did no work beyond looking after their house and children, and that as a rule they even had a *dagmeid* (daily maid) to help them.

The farmer showed me the house whilst his wife went on cooking the midday meal in the large kitchen which served also as main living room. Curtains could be drawn to hide the hearth. They were cooking with natural gas, though there was also electricity in the house. Two men were busy fixing a wireless, and in the adjoining parlour stood a piano.

"Not paid for yet," the farmer explained when he saw me looking at it.

On the other side of the hall were a large scullery and a w.c., and upstairs three bedrooms with fixed basins and running water. Furniture, carpets, pictures on the wall were all new

and modern. Well-to-do suburbia could not live more comfortably.

"Nobody will believe me when I tell them that an ordinary Dutch farmer lives like this," I told him. "Are you sure you are not the owner of a large estate?"

"Owner of debts," he said, his dark eyes laughing in his lean face.

"Well, as long as you can laugh at them . . ."

In the afternoon I was invited to look over another farm, one of the oldest and largest in the polder with its 180 acres. The farmer grew chiefly wheat, oats, peas, and sugar-beets and was full of praise for the excellence of the soil. He was a Groningen man in his early thirties and had spent a year or two in Canada so that he knew a little English. When he showed me a large rope-tractor, his eyes lit up. He had spent 10,000 guilders, more than 1,000 pounds, on his machinery chiefly of American origin. Proudly he pointed at the wheels of various vehicles all fitted with pneumatic tyres. They had proved of great advantage all over the polder.

This farmer was a much simpler man. He seemed more settled—as if his farm was a big enough world for him, whilst the other had apparently not forgotten that Alkmaar, the nearest little town, was about twenty-five miles away. Or was it his wife who could not forget? She was a member of a women's club—there were various existing in the polder, and she belonged to the most progressive of them, but meetings were few and far between, and there was little else to amuse her. The men had at least the Middenmeer inn where they could get a drink and play a game of billiards in the evenings.

When I asked how the young people spent their evenings, especially in winter, I was taken to the school at Middenmeer to see for myself. There, on the benches of the upper form, I found two dozen young men with their eyes glued on the teacher hardly older than themselves who was just writing on the blackboard: "CHOTKLNI."

"What are they doing?" I asked. We were standing in the hall and looking at them through a pane of glass in the wall.

"Go in and listen!"

"But can I?"

"Of course! We have permission from the Wieringermeer Directie, and that is the magic word here."

So we walked in and sat down in a corner and listened. It was certainly amazing enough. These farmers' sons and farm-labourers, young men between 16 and 20 and a few older ones, were being taught agricultural chemistry. At the moment they were halting at the composition of plants, and formula after formula appeared on the blackboard. They were not confused by them, as their answers to the teacher's questions and their own demonstrations on the blackboard showed clearly enough. Yet they looked like any ordinary young farm-hands—with thick hair, clumsy noses, heavy hands, with foreheads a bit too narrow and necks a bit too short. For an hour and a half they sat there in the brightly-lit modern school room, their brains working incessantly and only the youngest ones showing signs of fatigue.

At half-past-eight the bell rang for a short interval, and after that they settled down again for an hour and a half to a general knowledge class. The teacher saw no reason for my surprise. No farmer could afford nowadays to be stupid. These boys came voluntarily all through the winter three nights a week to continue their education and never missed a lesson. The girls were similarly instructed.

Maybe some of these young people will one day set out again to form the nucleus of a new polder population where today fishermen are still throwing their nets. Sea will be turned into land as long as Netherlanders are alive. If the task is great, so is the strength and ingenuity of man. That was the conviction with which I left the polder.



## "BIRTH-CONTROL BARRACKS."

BY A. TRYSTAN EDWARDS

**D**URING recent months eminent statisticians have been making the alarming prophecy that if certain present tendencies are allowed to proceed unchecked, within the next fifty years the population of Great Britain will show a serious decline. In some quarters it has even been estimated that this decline, unless it is accompanied by a proportionate decrease in the population of the other Great Powers, will make it quite impossible for this country to continue to hold its present outstanding position in the world. This apparent lack of fertility in human beings has been manifested to a certain extent in all the nations of Europe except Russia, but it is notorious that in the authoritarian States, at least, strenuous measures are now being adopted with the object of increasing the birth-rate. There is evidence to show that in Germany these measures have already met with considerable success.

Much has been written concerning the various causes of this sterility, but in the present argument it is proposed to devote special attention to the extent to which improper methods of housing may tend to discourage parents from having children. It is not contended for a moment that this is the only cause, for there are manifestly others, such as insufficient income, and undue pursuit of luxury or pleasure, or a lack of faith in the prospects of children born to a world destined to suffer the horrors of war. It is for statesmen and moralists to remove these causes of sterility in so far as they can be proved to exist, but there is one much more obvious circumstance which contributes to a decline in population than any of those just mentioned, and that is an actual lack of house room in which to put the babies, if and when they are born, and a lack of the most necessary comforts and conveniences which a well-designed home can contribute towards the raising of a family. This factor is

to a greater extent under our immediate control than any of the others to which the decline in population may be attributed.

It is here contended that what is now called "housing reform" often results in conditions seriously inimical to family life and that fewer babies per household are going to be born in the new dwellings than were born in the old. In fact, one may confidently predict that the pessimists who foresee the decline of Britain to a fifth-rate Power within fifty years have been guilty of an under-statement. Had they given adequate consideration to the effect of the activities of our housing "experts," they would perhaps have assessed the period at twenty-five years.

It has hitherto been considered that there are only three possible methods of tackling the slum problem. The first is to re-house the slum-dwellers in tenement blocks at densities varying from 40 to 70 to the acre in the built-up areas of existing towns. The second is to re-house them in suburban estates in houses at a maximum density of 12 to the acre. The third method is to re-house a certain proportion of slum dwellers in new towns. While the last may be an admirable solution it is, of course, not *immediately* practicable. Consequently the housing experts of the two dominant persuasions are thrown back upon the first two methods. There is yet another solution, namely, that of re-housing slum-dwellers in self-contained cottages at comparable densities per acre to that of the tenements. This solution is at the present moment forbidden by law, because it has been decreed that self-contained cottages at a density higher than 12 to the acre may not be erected anywhere.

Now let us consider the possible effects of these various methods of housing upon the rate of increase or decrease in the population. The case of the tenements may suitably be taken first. In order that no injustice may be done to those who are now carrying out the policy of building tenements, let me quote from an authorized statement giving the proportion of dwelling of various types of accommodation in tenement blocks recently erected in the London area. In the Lorraine Estate, situated in the Metropolitan Borough of Islington, six blocks of flats each five storeys high provide 321 dwellings of which 41 are of two rooms only, 168 of three rooms, 102 of four rooms and 10 of five rooms. It is noteworthy that more than half of these

tenements have not more than two bedrooms besides the sitting-room. In many other instances which could be cited the proportionate numbers of various-sized tenements is similar to those here indicated. In this connection it may be of interest if I quote a statement derived from a volume entitled "Slum Clearance and Re-housing" which was issued in 1934 by a body which described itself as the Council for Research on Housing Reconstruction. This volume is devoted to the advocacy of tenement building. After an analysis of the percentage distribution of family sizes it concludes that as a general average in every 100 tenements it would be desirable to have five of one room, 10 to 15 of two rooms, 50 of three rooms, 25 to 30 four rooms and 5 of five rooms.

What kind of families are supposed to occupy these small dwellings? Obviously a large proportion of them will be young married couples with one child. An examination of the plans recommended by the Council of Housing Research shows that this second bedroom is large enough to accommodate only one bed. So, obviously, these young married couples with one child are not being encouraged by housing authorities to increase their families. It may be assumed, however, that a baby could be accommodated in the parent's bedroom while an older child might be in the single bedroom. When these children grew up the parents would have to go house hunting again, but they would not find it easy to obtain accommodation because the housing authorities have a programme of building which assumes that their families are static. Let us suppose for the sake of argument that this second bedroom were capable of containing two beds, although as a matter of fact an examination of numerous plans of three room tenements erected by Local Authorities proves that it is very seldom the case. Let us suppose also that the parents have one child and have a laudable desire to increase their family. If this first child is a boy, and the second child is a girl, the law relating to overcrowding very properly forbids their occupying the same bedroom after one or other of them has attained the age of ten years. Now, after a first child is born, the chance that a second child will be of the opposite sex to the first one is approximately one half ; therefore



50% of those families could not remain in their dwellings after one of their children has reached the age of ten years. Surely this circumstance is a very grave deterrent to the procreation of children. It looks as if in the name of housing reform we are causing a decrease in our population comparable to that which might result from a great war or a devastating plague. The danger does not seem to be exaggerated when we bear in mind the fact that the London County Council has the firm intention to rebuild almost the whole of the East End of London in tenement blocks, or, as they are universally described by the residents of that locality, "birth-control barracks."

It may be of interest if we examine the type of house put up in hundreds of thousands by the speculative builder at a period when the population was increasing by leaps and bounds. The reader will not require to be told what manner of housing this was. It consisted of rows and rows of little cottages, each with a small parlour in front, a kitchen, living room at the back with a scullery jutting out and providing a not unwelcome screen to the back-yard. On the first floor there were never less than three bedrooms and frequently four. We are not here concerned with the architectural design of these streets, which left much to be desired, but at least the essential conditions of family life were provided there. Moreover, the arrangement was very flexible, inasmuch as if in any instance the family of the householder was a small one he was at liberty to take in one or more lodgers. The system worked admirably; when the family grew the lodgers were turned out and found accommodation elsewhere. But the main point was that the structure of the house always allowed for a family of at least three children.

It is highly questionable whether the sub-divisions of families which are now being catered for in the two and the one-room tenements would not really be more happy and comfortable if they were sub-tenants in a house where possibly certain services could be provided for them, and where they could have essential accommodation far more cheaply than in the tenements. There is quite a large section of people who are not prepared to do their own housework and who are content to have the status of lodgers. Among these will be found widowers, widows in daily employment, single men and single women, elderly

couples drawing the old-age pension who could not possibly afford to rent a two-roomed or even a one-roomed tenement, and young couples who start their married life in the home of one or other of their parents. This is often of great convenience to the parties concerned, and if the population is to be maintained at its present level there is a great deal to be said for encouraging early marriages, even if the young people are not immediately able to rent their own home. In the same category will be found numerous women whose husbands have occupations which necessitate their being away from home most of the year. It is almost the universal practice that the young wives of soldiers and sailors reside with their parents-in-law.

This practice of designing large numbers of dwellings with only two bedrooms has extended even to the new suburban housing estates. At Becontree, for instance, out of 25,000 new cottages nearly 9,000 have only two bedrooms. Housing policy appears to be determined by quite unimaginative statisticians who try to solve their problem by providing accommodation for all the families or sub-divisions of families on the assumption that the numbers in each unit are *static*. But that is not the case. Moreover, the policy of planning vast numbers of one, two and three-roomed tenements greatly adds to the cost of re-housing because it means that instead of providing expensive kitchen and bathroom equipment on the average for every five persons, it is provided for every 3 persons. It is argued in certain quarters that the much more economical method of allowing the great majority of single people and very small family units to find their accommodation as lodgers in three or four-bedroomed houses is rejected by our housing experts because of their strong desire to *control* the lives of the wage-earners in every detail. In most of the new housing estates lodgers are not allowed.

Enough has here been said to prove that modern dwellings provided for the benefit of the wage-earners, in a large proportion of cases, by their very structure, which expresses a severe limitation of space, compel people to limit their families. But there are other factors in the new dwellings, which also act as a deterrent to the procreation of children. The difficulties of bringing up a family in a tenement block are well known. The

following statement from one of the tenants on the fourth floor of a new block of tenements erected by a Housing Society may be of interest in this connection. He says :

" I have not been given what I can regard as a proper home for a family man. It is asking too much of my wife to make her go up and down so many stairs for every little thing that she needs. When she wants to take the baby out she has first to carry the pillows down to the pram shed, so it means a second journey upstairs to fetch the baby. Often she does not feel up to it, so both mother and baby go without their outing. There is a small yard in which my older children can play, but if they make the least noise the caretaker chucks them out. No ball games are allowed."

It is fairly clear that even if this man had four or five bedrooms at his disposal he would not have any more children. Those that he had were born before he came to the tenement block. Unfortunately neither the Census nor the Registrar General's Statistical Review gives information in such a form that we could compare the birth-rate in tenement blocks with that in self-contained cottages.

Of course, the excuse for " building high " is that a large proportion of the slum-dwellers must be re-housed near their work, and as the cost of land is £10,000 an acre or more and it is now not permitted by law to erect more than twelve cottages to the acre, the only alternative is to build tenements. Thus, self-contained cottages could not be regarded as a practical alternative unless they could be designed at such high density that they would provide accommodation for the same number of people per acre as do the tenements. Whether or not this is possible is a matter not of opinion but of fact. An examination of recent reports giving details of proposed schemes of tenement building by the London County Council and by Metropolitan Boroughs shows that it was not of uncommon occurrence a few years ago for tenements to be planned at a density of as much as 70 to the acre. Nowadays an attempt has been made to limit the density to 50 to the acre and in some recent instances we even find that it is between 40 and 45. It would therefore be quite fair to say that if self-contained cottages could be planned so that they provide accommodation for the same number of people as do tenements at 50 to the acre and if, furthermore, it could be proved that these same cottages satisfied a high hygienic standard with regard to accommodation and sunlight in the rooms, then the case for a change in the



present housing policy of building tenements would be irrefutable.

In order, however, to design cottages of accommodation equivalent to that provided in 50 tenements per acre it is by no means necessary to plan self-contained cottages at as high a density, for the simple reason that the cottages, none of which would have less than three bedrooms, would be considerably bigger than the tenements. It has been ascertained that the average number of persons per tenement is 3.65, the average number of rooms is 3.1 and the average floor area is only 580 sq. ft. It may be noted that in the volume issued by the Council for Research on Housing Construction, to which reference has already been made, the sizes for the rooms in tenements are given as sitting-room 150 sq. ft., first bedroom 125 sq. ft., other bedrooms 95 and 65 sq. ft. Considerable research on this subject of a comparison between tenements and high density cottages was undertaken by the Ex-Servicemen's Group of the Hundred New Towns Association, which held an exhibition at the Housing Centre in 1936. At this exhibition, which was opened by the President of the British Legion, a large number of drawings were shown exemplifying types of housing which would be acceptable to slum-dwellers themselves. One of these drawings was of a lay-out of ten acres at 30 houses to the acre. Of the 300 houses there shown 174 were four-roomed, 62 were five-roomed, 12 were six-roomed and 52 were seven-roomed. The number of people accommodated per house would be 5.87 and the average area of the houses 1,060 square feet. A simple calculation reveals that on the average 30 of such houses provide accommodation equivalent to that of 50 tenements. Moreover, the lay-out included a central open space of an acre and a quarter, and the occupants of the houses would not only have immediate access to the playgrounds but exclusive to each dwelling, on the average, a private garden or yard of 250 sq. ft., a roof garden of 125 sq. ft. and balconies of area 75 sq. ft., that is to say, a total of 450 sq. ft. open air space for their private and exclusive use. In the tenements the "balconies for babies" often on the third, fourth, fifth and sixth floors are seldom as much as 10 sq. ft.

The final consideration to which the foregoing arguments

must lead is, of course, the amendment of the existing Building Bye Laws and Model Clauses which determine the maximum permissible housing density. The slum-dwellers consulted by the Ex-Servicemen's Group of the Hundred New Towns Association appear to favour a complete veto of tenements provided that a practical alternative can be found. In proposing such an alternative it is not intended to lower the present standard of housing, but, on the contrary, to raise it by insisting upon a considerably higher minimum standard of accommodation than is now enforced or accepted by Local Authorities. The following conditions for family life were considered essential :

1. Every house should have its principal living room on the ground floor and there should be a private backyard or garden of not less than 150 sq. ft. and in addition a street playground or other recreational space for the children immediately accessible from the dwelling.

2. No house for family occupation to be of less than four rooms, the minimum dimensions of which to be sitting room 180 sq. ft., bedrooms 150, 120 and 80 sq. ft. Bathroom and water closet to be separate and space in the hall to be provided for the perambulator and separate access from the hall and staircase for all the rooms.

The conclusions here arrived at, although they may be supported by reason, will alter nothing unless they are also upheld by those who have power to implement their judgments. Hitherto these important matters of housing density have been decided by "expert" advisers to the Government or to Local Authorities, who have not entered into consultation with the slum-dwellers themselves. Perhaps the excuse for this omission was that the wage-earners who were to be rehoused lacked an appropriate organ for the expression of their opinions upon this matter which concerns them so closely. Therefore, we await the formation of a body of wage-earners, organized on a non-party basis, who will insist that no project of rehousing for their benefit can take place without taking into account their own well-founded opinions on the subject. Such a development may be considered an inevitable and not unwelcome extension of the processes of democratic governance. There is one judgment in which, it may confidently be predicted, the representatives of the slum-dwellers will agree. It will be expressed in the slogan : " No More Tenements."

## CUISINE INTERNATIONALE

### *A Sketch*

BY DORA BIRTLES

MY half-sister Isolde has a vigorous personality. Never before has she stayed with us for more than a day at a time, just long enough for her to say "How do you do?" between rapid transits from one to another of the smaller European capitals she frequents. When, like a brightly coloured woman-bird of mythology, she spread operative wings over our sleepy little town of Wootton-under-Stoke, it became an adventure for everybody, particularly for Jennifer, my wife.

"Darling," Jenny whispered the night we had the first cable heralding Isolde's approach—altogether there were ten cables and telegrams, Isolde always acts the impresario to herself—"Darling, please always call me *Jennifer* in front of Isolde."

"Why? What is wrong with Jenny?"

"It's so drab. So maidservantish. So poor, in-the-kitchen, commonplace Mrs. Jenny Wren;" She curled herself up under my arm like a squirrel, a very attractive squirrel. "Listen", I said.

Jennifer—Isolde. The names reveal the women. Jennifer is small, practical domestic, sweet-flowering from a vicarage garden. Her life story is as conventionally cut to pattern as a daisy, her mind fastened firmly round certain fundamentally sound ideas, only occasionally does her soul fall into sudden air-pockets of inferiority.

Isolde on the other hand is large, voluptuous in the bosomy, "fine figure of a woman" sense and has an exotic history and a background perpetually quivering with the brassy and strings of a full Wagnerian orchestra. She has been everywhere and done everything. Psychology, politics, winter sports and



cookery. She can tell you in a moment the best cake shop in Cracow or where to have your boots made in Budapest. To her friends she brings good luck, and when she appears on any scene something exciting usually happens. She is good-tempered, downright and insufferably domineering, a benevolent despot to her acquaintances. But when those who have suffered under her have finished enumerating the long list of her exasperating faults they invariably end up, "She has a good heart". Isolde talks socialism but retains a feudal manner towards any who serve her. Once I watched her subjugate an entire Austrian village.

She had hired an inferior Tyrolese *Schloss* for the season and took it for granted that the village went with the lease of the *Schloss*. As a lawyer I could not make her understand that it did not; as a relative I shared her prestige. "*Graf*" they called me. The fishing corporation of the little *See*, the cheese factory, the flower and fruit growers all offered her their first-fruits regardless of recompense. At the local miracle play she had the best seats without paying for them, and after the show the Devil presented her with a bouquet! When the time came for my departure, Isolde, I and the *Schloss* gardener, with the *Schloss* barrow piled high with my luggage, arrived at the station ten minutes after the train had left. The porter, the barrowman, Isolde and the ticket collector were overwhelmed at the calamity. There was not another train that day. Then the station master, be-braided, came out of his office and apologized. "Had the *Gräfin* only telephoned, he said, quite naturally, "we should have kept the train till she came."

"How stupid of me," said Isolde just as naturally, "I should have thought of that."

A number of gentlemanly foreigners have offered her romance—and the more impecunious wedding rings as well . . . I have been called in to avert at least five such alliances, but I cannot count the multitude of impractical business schemes from which I have also saved her. Isolde's financial vagaries would fill volumes.

Her mother, my father's first wife, was half Russian, half Norwegian and after her death on my father's re-marriage, Isolde, aged two and a half, had been brought up in Berlin by

her Norwegian grandmother and was subsequently taken to Moscow by her maternal grandpapa. My father, who, I must say, took his paternal duties perfunctorily, made one stipulation, that she be taught English, but when at the age of eighteen she came to live with us in England she was linguistically, as well as emotionally, bewildered. In all languages she felt herself a step-daughter. She was never at home in England and when she came in for her modest inheritance went to Vienna.

When I had explained all this, Jenny was stirred. She thought Isolde had been sadly treated by life; she wanted to lavish on her all the sisterly and family affection of which she had been so long deprived; she wanted to wrap round her her own warm Vicarage childhood and make her, at last, feel at home in England.

Isolde finally arrived at 2 a.m., furred, effusive and frolicsome with gifts hanging all over her. Jenny was positively pulsating with welcome, there was rejoicing enough for a prodigal, but as we were at last retiring for what was left of the night, Jenny made an innocent remark, a comment that in itself showed the beginnings of a new era. "Do you know", she said, "all Isolde takes for breakfast is a glass of very hot tea with a spoonful of jam in it! Jam! When I asked her what kind of jam she said any kind and suggested quince, peach, melon . . . I haven't any of those kinds in the larder. What shall I do?"

"Give her plum," I said, and added, "It's a Russian habit to take jam in one's tea."

"She's frightfully continental, isn't she?" remarked Jenny, pushing the pillow into shape under her head. "I wonder what Wootton-under-Stoke will think of her."

\* \* \* \* \*

Wootton-under-Stoke talked of nothing but Isolde for a fortnight and then, fortunately, dissension arose in the committee for the Horticultural Show and Pyrotechnical Society (affiliated bodies), and public attention took only side glances at the German training suit in which Isolde lounged about in between sun-bathing, the Austrian *Dirndl* she wore to a garden party and the Labrador dog, big as a foal that she had brought with her from Norway. It is still a mystery to me how Isolde procured

the necessary documents to release the lumbering creature from quarantine.

Left to herself Jenny is a good and intuitive housewife, but now she trotted round the house putting into execution the thousand and one hints on housekeeping that Isolde kept on vouchsafing, how rice should be cooked, carnations staked up and sunflower seeds saved for a parrot we might never buy. Emphatically a domestic dictator.

"Her continental tradition, maybe," observed Jenny who was, in the new scheme of things, acquiring the art of irony. She had, under Isolde's personal direction, spoiled two lots of summer preserves, unsuccessfully dyed her newest evening dress and changed her style of hairdressing to a mode I detest. She had also ruined for ever the set of our drawing-room loose covers. "Or perhaps," she added ruminatively, "the absence of love in her childhood." She cast me a withering look for my father's sins of affectionate omission. She had begun to catch on to Isolde's Freudian jargon while I had begun to understand why none of the fair fleshy Tristrams of Isolde's past had ever ventured out of the garden love scene into the cathedral set for a wedding.

I was glad it was term time and our two boys away at school. Unquestionably they would have written down their aunt as a know-all and made loud and offensive noises at the menus. All their favourites, lemon batter pudding, chocolate mousse (they called it "mouse") gooseberry fool, custard tarts, ginger sundae and Queen of Hearts cookies were banished from the board. Aunt Isolde disapproved of the whole genus of English puddings. Instead of them we ate cheeses, salads and apples, pears and plums distressingly *au naturel*. Isolde was a connoisseur of cheeses; soon there were sixteen different kinds in the house, and the most fabulous of them came from Iceland! It was brown, soft and highly reminiscent of the long-horned sheep.

Our two maids and the kitchen help had faces as long as fiddles. "Let them take their holidays," Isolde bade Jenny, "then I'll be able to initiate you into a really international cuisine. I'm just in the mood to play at hausfrau."

So the maids went off. A woman came in to sweep and wash up, and Isolde made us full members of a culinary League of



Nations, and we dined in a different national home each evening. Sukiyaki, borsch, pilaffi, yaprakia, goulasch, nasigoring, snitchel.

Presently there were complications. Isolde has a lavish hand. Our large refrigerator, pride of Jenny's housewifely heart, was choked with a rainbow of the smaller left-overs; there was a mountain of cold pilaffi under silver cover and the copper in the laundry was full of borsch. "I think," said Jenny, "I'd better send all the things to the laundry this week, it looks as if it will be some time before the copper is free. . . . Is there anything you wouldn't mind being boiled the colour of beetroot, John?" "Isolde," I said. Unasked I doubled the housekeeping money. It was the least I could do.

That evening we had *bouillabaisse*, which is authentically a Provençal fish soup. Thackeray wrote a poem about it. Isolde knew the poem and recited it. She did not however comprehend that it was a humorous piece . . . The soup was a magnificent concoction. I was under the obligation of having three helpings of it. Afterwards we were all convinced that we had been eating on the grand scale. . . . there were several large tureens of *bouillabaisse* still remaining. . . . Isolde proposed that the following night we should consume goose, roasted and stuffed with chestnuts, and apricots in the Swedish style and for the dessert *yaourt*, a Bulgarian dish of soured cream that takes fourteen hours of careful temperature to prepare.

"Don't you think," suggested Jenny, "We could leave it till another day?"

"But the goose is ordered," answered Isolde and opened her large wide dark Russian eyes in expostulatory surprise. "I thought you'd *like* to learn how a goose is done in Sweden. I spent a whole winter once in Sweden, and their Christmas food . . . Ah!" She fluttered her eyelids at the recollection of the cooking genius of the Swedes. "It's a revelation. A positive education." It was obvious that Jenny's goose was to be cooked.

"There are so many things," said Jenny desperate, "already left over in the larder. We oughtn't to waste them."

Isolde had an inspiration. "Couldn't we have a dinner party and get your friends to eat things up?" She waved an eloquent

spoon in the general direction of the copper of borsch, the mountain of pilaffi, the soup tureens of bouillabaisse.

This was precisely what Jenny had been afraid of. "Wootton-under-Stoke is not used to eating this kind of food," she murmured.

"Then they'll be delighted," announced Isolde triumphantly, "to have the opportunity of tasting it."

\* \* \* \* \*

She was right. Conversationally and gastronomically the meal—it was called a Balkan Dinner—was a huge success. After it our seven guests, the Rector and his wife, Col. Dashard and his lady, Dr. and Mrs. Morgan Pettars and Jim Sayers, bachelor, leaned back in their chairs like a litter of replete puppies. "It must have taken you more than a week to prepare" said Mrs. Morgan Pettars with not a thought of being, literally, correct. Jenny had the grace to blush. She was bathed in a confusion of guilty knowledge. Isolde stepped into the breach. "The most difficult thing in this part of the country is to obtain some of the necessary ingredients. Do you know . . ." She was well launched in anecdote. Jenny stepped over to me and asked, urgently, "Do you think anybody noticed signs of *age* or *wear* in the food? Do you think they'll go down with a special Balkan stomach-ache *before* they get home?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Isolde's menu had been a double-starred success, but rebellion had at last stirred in Jenny. Curiously enough it was not over a question of food. "You know those two queer flat necklaces Isolde sent me three Christmasses ago?" Jenny asked. "Well, out of compliment to her I put them on to-night. You *do* know them. They are both exactly the same length, and I have never been able to get either of them to lie inside or outside the other, though they are evidently made to be worn together. I told her about it this evening, in front of Mrs. Dashard, the Rector's wife, and Mrs. Morgan Pettars, and she laughed like anything, and said, "Over your shoulders, my dear." They are not necklaces at all but shoulder-straps. You hook your lingerie and dress up on them by little loops." . . . Imagine! And I have been wearing them as a necklace all these years!" The laugh was indeed against Jenny. Mrs. Morgan Pettars

would make the most of the anecdote at all our neighbours' bridge teas. I could imagine Isolde flinging back her head and laughing her throaty, cat-happy purr, "You have been wearing a pair of dress straps as necklaces !"

\* \* \* \* \*

Then there was Jim Sayers, Jenny's weak spot. For years Jim had sported the open secret of a hopeless passion for Jenny, who had worn the tribute like a crimson carnation in the buttonhole of her sentimental life. Isolde, according to Jenny, had offended Jim.

This surprised me, for Jim was in the line of Isolde's Tristram types. Tall, fair, fleshy, with a sensuous mouth, he might have been an English copy of a certain Herr Doktor Pf.... "How do you mean, offended Jim?" I demanded.

"She found out," said Jenny, "that he was the only son of a widowed mother and jumped to the conclusion that that was why he had never married."

Next day Isolde asked me a few straight questions about Jim. "How old is he?"

"About thirty eight," I replied. Isolde I knew was thirty-four.

"Is his job worth while?"

"Comfortable enough."

"Pity he has friend Oedipus in his make-up." She said it very casually as if dismissing Jim Sayers for ever. It always amazes me that women can take the risk of an action for slander every day of their lives. I thought her continental frankness a trifle brutal, but her judgment amused me, I had always suspected Jim of having worn a blue-ribboned bow throughout his boyhood.

\* \* \* \* \*

The fame of our Balkan dinner reached the ears of the Dowager Duchess, irreverently called the D.D., who queened it over the elderly section of County society. When Jenny, the Rector's wife, and Isolde called on the D.D. she asked Isolde to arrange "A Middle-Europe menu for a political repast I am giving." The D.D. was a devotee of an International Peace movement and a speech-maker of repute. "In these Terrible Times," she boomed at Isolde, Jenny and the Rector's wife, "the least we



can do is to try to understand the Other Man's Point of View, and, since we are so often told that the best approach to a man's heart is through his stomach, it behoves us occasionally to cultivate the International Spirit of Goodwill by eating some of the Curious Concoctions that inspire our continental neighbours with such Bellicose Ambitions."

Into the void created by this ponderous period Isolde dropped the information that the D.D. would find a Polish kisiel owocowy "jolly tasty".

The "Middle-Europe repast" gave Isolde a County reputation. With her aid the Younger Set held a Swedish Supper that was a riotous success, because under Isolde's guidance the special Swedish punch needed a good strong Swedish wooden head to stand up to it. Before the evening was out even the supper room attendants were dancing the Swedish mazurka. Then the Golf Club had a South Sea dinner-dance and, there being an "r" in the month, the shell fish scollop was exceptionally fine. After the dinner, however, there was an administrative shock or two. A golf club elder, going over the bill of costs, complained that seven quarts of whisky for the soup (*bêche-de-mer*) was clearly an error and that the item should be deleted from the bill. Isolde, who had prepared the menu, was approached by a deputation of committee-men. "Did the member complain of the taste of the soup?" she asked.

"No, he says, and everyone else says, it tasted fine."

"That was because *bêche-de-mer* soup, Chinese style, always takes half-a-cup of whisky to the quart." So the committee paid up, and the elder announced his intention of emigrating to the South Seas. That joke, too, ran around the county.

Some idea of the popularity of Isolde's activity can be seen from the fact that the Rector's Wife went to the length of organising an Arabian Nights Tea for the Womens' Institutes. The women wore breastplates and baggy trousers and enjoyed themselves immensely. While they ate *loukoumia* (otherwise Turkish Delight) and drank gallons of tea, Isolde gave them a short and instructive talk explaining that in Turkey the harem had been abolished and that tea had not yet penetrated the country as a national beverage.

She was indefatigable in all these exploits, her energy tremendous. Votes of thanks were continually being moved to her. So, at home, she let Jenny run the kitchen more or less as it had always been run, except for sporadic dishes like Flaskpankaka, which turned out to be pickled pork pancakes that lay heavy on the stomach or Brebis à la Grecque, which was an Argentine lamb stewed whole with a pound of ripe olives in its head and a paste of tomato and garlic in its other empty places. Our 'phone was continually engaged with social calls, women ringing up to know "just how" to explain kolduny or shchi to their unwilling cooks. They were all soothed by pontifical answers from Isolde, whose popularity was immense. Except in the kitchens.

"If the cooks and butlers of the district had any sense," said Jenny, "they would form a trade union with 'Eat British' as a slogan and 'Down with Foreign Menus. It is not as if Isolde has a light hand in cooking. I assure you she hasn't. If she made an apple pie or a batter pudding nobody except the blind or the tasteless would want to eat it. She couldn't turn a cheap cut of steak into something appetising to save her life. When she cooks the kitchen is a zoo, and after she is finished there isn't a clean plate or spoon or basin anywhere. It takes hours to clean up after her. And nobody could go wrong with the ingredients she uses, sturgeon, smoked salmon, caviare, wines and sauces and mushrooms and chickens. . . . She treats chickens in the kitchen as if they were as common as sparrows in the field. . . ." I had never known Jenny so full of force, so bitter.

"Jenny," I said softly, teasing her, "You don't expect a man who writes poetry to be a great prose writer as well, do you?"

She was not pleased. "Go away," she said, throwing off my caressing hand, "Veal and ham pie and custards and clear soup and a well-done rump steak aren't poetry!" With unerring accuracy she had picked out some of the foods of which I am fondest. "Very well then. I'll go in for some nasty modern verse myself. That might suit you better."

\* \* \* \* \*

She was as bad as her word. The results were lamentable. The kitchen staff, returned from their holiday, turned sulky on

her. We had Corn Pone from an American recipe and escalopes of veal from a German. The corn pone was watery and full of whiskers and the escalopes were like second-hand boot soles. The climax came with *escargots à la* . . . I have forgotten their native place of origin, but the least of their evils was the horrible green slimy sauce that accompanied them. Geoff, our eldest, was home for his mid-term week-end. "Mummy!" his horrified voice rang out over the lunch table, "Snails!" He dashed towards the bathroom from which there immediately emerged certain gruesome sounds. . . .

"Darling," I urged Jenny later after a lengthy pacification of the outraged Geoff, "Give it up, pet. I'm sorry. Forgive me. I've always considered roast beef the epic of the English kitchen and apple pie the noblest work of woman."

"John sweet," she replied, wiping a teary face all over one of my biggest handkerchiefs, "I'm so mortified. I . . . I got them from the grocer's out of such an expensive tin. It said, on the label, '*Superfin. Produit de la France.*' I . . . I thought it would be a nice surprise for you and Isolde. I . . . I had no idea that," she sobbed noisily into her handkerchief, "that they would still . . . still have their shells on and look so very snailly." She sobbed harder. "If this gets about Wootton-under-Stoke!"

It did. A good thing like that can't be kept under cover. The Rector's Wife, when next she called, remarked, "I believe you're going in for snails now?"

Isolde said quickly, "Yes, Jenny got some but they weren't the right sort. Now, cooked properly, with just a *soupçon* of white wine and no gravy at all . . ." She proceeded to describe a miracle of a dish of snails that she had once partaken of in Provence.

"And do you eat frogs' legs too?" asked the Rector's Wife jejunely.

"Never," cried Isolde. "I'm a member of the Russian Help Dumb Comrades League and it isn't done. No. I've seen frogs skinned alive in the market women's baskets in North Italy. It's revolting!" So Isolde was guaranteed 100% humanitarian—she promised to help at the Food Stall of the next R.S.P.C.A. bazaar—and only poor Jenny was suspect.



It was after this episode that I had a brief conversation with Isolde. "Getting bored with England?" I asked, "Hankering to be back amid your continental fleshpots?"

"Not a bit," she replied, "I've fallen in love with the English landscape." She almost crushed me in one of her impetuous half-sisterly embraces. "You know I'm beginning to *like* the English. I'm beginning to feel at home here!"

"In that case," I said, "since you've drawn round yourself quite a circle of friends and acquaintances, why not take a flat in the town? An English market town can be very amusing, and Wootton-under-Stoke is the typical market-town at its best. It would give you more scope for your entertaining. Your own special little parties and all that."

The matter was arranged, and Isolde moved.

Jenny was at once contrite. Her soft little heart was uncomfortable. She recalled that Isolde had not had the warm family atmosphere of a vicarage childhood, that in every country she had always been a step-daughter. Moreover, she had a confession to make. "John," she said, "I'm afraid I've turned Jim Sayers against her."

"Against whom?"

"Isolde."

"You indiscreet little goose," I said, knowing her well and suspecting the worst, "You've blurted out something about 'friend Oedipus' haven't you?" She nodded her head. As a responsible partner in the oldest established firm of solicitors in Wootton-under-Stoke I know the value of discretion. I have never, however, succeeded in impressing its virtues on Jenny. But I should not scold her. I hate calculating women. Jenny's simpleness is for me one of her chief charms.

## THE AUDIENCE IS THE THING

BY ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL

**I**N the April issue of *THE FORTNIGHTLY*, Mr. Hubert Griffith compared the London stage detrimentally with New York.

I was compelled, and I think many other readers were compelled, to agree with Mr. Griffith in his conclusions. But I think that it is profitable to take the analysis a stage further and discover why the New York theatre succeeds where the London theatre fails.

Mr. Griffith cited some "socially significant" plays, such as *Dead End*, that had run successfully in commercial New York theatres. I do not think, however, that the reason for that success can be understood without some appreciation of the Federal Theatre Project.

The F.T.P. was started as a scheme for the relief of unemployment in the entertainment industry. The blows dealt to the legitimate theatre by the growth of the film-industry were completed by the depression. Dozens of stock companies were disbanded because they could not be operated economically. The old theatre audiences had only enough money for the cinema. Hundreds of actors, vaudeville artists, clowns, elephants and performing seals were starving. Something had to be done.

Actors and actresses have never proved very efficient at hard manual labour. They were useless to help build Boulder Dam or other works on the project. And so the authorities found themselves going into the theatre business, not for æsthetic but social reasons. The first provision that was made has governed the project throughout. Ninety per cent. of the money expended on Federal Theatre Productions must go on salaries. In New York, the top "security wage" paid to an actor is \$103.40 a month (£20 10s.), while over the country the average is \$83 (£16 10s.). Only one person from each family can have a job; so that in certain cases a theatrical family, in order to be together

and working, hires out for one salary. One benefit performance a week is given to other workers on relief. In addition, charity performances are given at C.C.C. camps, hospitals, asylums, children's settlements and so on. When prices are charged for admission, the most expensive seat in the house is 55 cents. (2s. 2d.).

The intention from the very beginning has been to provide theatrical entertainment which will not compete with the commercial theatre. For this reason, Mrs. Hallie Flanagan was appointed national director. Mrs. Flanagan had made a world-wide reputation for herself by the direction of non-commercial plays at Vassar's Experimental Theatre. Mrs. Flanagan refused to see any handicap in the relief aspect of the Theatre Project. She declared the project to be "based on the belief that there is intelligence, experience and enthusiasm in the thousands of theatre people on relief rolls . . . "We need a theatre adapted to new times and new conditions."

There was thus at the outset a dual aim in the Federal Theatre, which might with tactless handling have become a contradiction. Started to keep actors from starving, it might actually develop into a National Theatre on a scale never before conceived. In Paris or London, we think of a national theatre, as one theatre in the metropolis. In the U.S.A. it consists of hundreds of companies all over the country—in Los Angeles and San Francisco, Jacksonville and Cincinnati. It consists of straight players, vaudeville, marionette shows and circuses. The economic necessity provided a much firmer foundation for a scheme of this size than any love of art.

Of course, the scheme was immediately attacked. The Republicans used it as a point against the Democrats. The newspapers, at least 70% of which are opposed to the Roosevelt administration, received Federal Theatre Productions either with abuse or silence. The project was received with different feelings in different parts of the country. It needed care and thought to know what plays would suit what audiences. Broadway hits which had drawn full houses in New York were howling failures in the Middle West.

The accomplishments of the project in the two years of its existence have, in fact, been remarkable enough to revolutionize



the attitude of the general public towards theatre-going and to exert an important influence on the commercial theatre itself. Thousands of people who thought that a theatre was a place where they shewed moving pictures have become keen followers of the living drama. It is the incorporation of this element in the theatre-going public that has effected such a radical change in the productions themselves. In New York, as in London, the theatre-going public had been limited to certain sections of society. The high-priced seats were reserved—for economic reasons—for the rich: the upper circle and the gallery for poorer members of the middle class. A young man would not take his girl to the gallery of a theatre, when he could get her the best seats in a cinema. If young people went to the theatre at all, it was separately, two girls or two boys. An enormous section, the industrial and agricultural workers, was never reached at all. This resulted in the condition which Mr. Hubert Griffith deplures, a theatre catering inanely to the prejudice and snobbery of a single class. With the reduction of the price of tickets, an infinitely wider audience was discovered: but it was an audience which had its own needs. Those needs, because they are realistic, concerned with the problems that beset the great mass of human beings of our time, demand the type of drama which Mr. Griffith wants as an artist.

Of course, a large number of old favourites, melodramas, musicals and comedies have been put on by the F.T.P. actors. But there has been a freedom of experiment which no commercial manager could afford to take: a freedom which has justified itself in the majority of cases. T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* played to packed houses, until it was withdrawn because the English owner of the rights to the play decided to bring over his own company. Auden's *Dance of Death* was then put on, with the result that the Theatre Guild bought *Ascent of F.6* to put on as a commercial production. These two in the first season.

In the second year, the Orson Welles production of *Dr. Faustus*, with a negro as Mephistopheles, and a magical use of vertical lighting, followed up the previous successes. Mr. Orson Welles is now acting-managing *Julius Cæsar*, played as an anti-fascist drama, and *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. These

two plays are being done commercially, but as a result of the Federal Theatre's example. Mr. Orson Welles has also put on *The Cradle Will Rock* by Marc Blitzstein, a play originally sponsored by the Federal Theatre, but banned on the night of its first performance owing to the pressure of the Steel Trusts. (The play is concerned with the unionization of a steel factory and it was first put on during the steel-unionization drive. Though the Federal Theatre has a freedom from censorship that is remarkable, it sometimes happens, as in this case, that powerful vested interests are able to enforce a censorship). These three plays, all running to crowded audiences at popular prices, (\$1.10 top price), are the direct result of the Federal Theatre's influence. Furthermore the technique is one of effective simplicity, such as is enforced on any company with little money to spend on properties. In *Julius Cæsar* as in *Dr. Faustus* lighting takes the place of scenery; in *The Cradle Will Rock*, sheer acting makes the imagination of the audience provide the properties. When this play was banned on its opening night, its sponsor, Blitzstein—with a play, actors and audience—took another theatre for the evening. The actors were forbidden to appear on the stage. Three or four took fright and refused to appear at all. The rest acted in the stalls and boxes, while Blitzstein sat at the piano in the centre of the stage and explained to the audience what scene was taking place and whose part he was taking himself. This production was so effective that when Orson Welles put the play on commercially it was formalized along those lines. All the characters are on the stage all the time, sitting in three rows on raised chairs. Blitzstein, still on the stage with his piano, explains the scene as the actors descend to the forestage to act. At different times he leaves his piano to act one part or another himself.

This return to the Elizabethan tradition of acting is more effective than the "realism," that has bound the modern stage. For example, there is a scene in a drug-store, when a company's thug shoots a labour leader. He draws a gun. There is no detonation, but as the leader falls, Blitzstein stops playing the piano, turns to the audience and says quietly, "There is the sound of an explosion." That sentence, spoken in the silence, is more explosive than gunpowder. And Broadway is learning

that : witness the production of Thornton Wilder's play of small-town life. No scenery, no props. So original, everyone says. But the idea comes from the Federal Theatre.

Striking as the work of the Federal Theatre is in the revivals of classics and the production of plays modelled on existent forms, their most remarkable venture is the *Living Newspaper*. It is the creation of a new form, to express the needs of unemployed writers and actors. Its parents are the March of Time newsreels and broadcasts. The stage is used to dramatize some problem of wide public interest. The present one, for example, the fifth of the series, is devoted to the housing question in New York. It is called "*. . . one third of a nation . . .*" a fragment from a speech by the President, in which he said he saw "one third of a nation, ill-clothed, ill-housed and under-nourished". The scene opens with a gigantic set, the cross-section of a rickety tenement, rooms split in half, a flight of crazy stairs, a narrow landing, a fire-escape too rickety for anyone to climb down. It is a death-trap. Fire breaks out. The inhabitants rush to the stairs, clamour at the windows. A crowd stands out in the street. There is the screech of sirens.

There, says a voice from a megaphone at the back, is what happens when a fire breaks out in a slum tenement. How does this state of affairs arise ?

The lights face on the back stage. Interest centres forward. We go back to the time, when there were Indians grazing cattle on Manhattan Island. We trace the village of New York, growing and growing. A gentleman in eighteenth-century costume comes in. This is Mr. So and So, says the voice. His name might be Roosevelt, Astor or Vanderbilt. He spreads out a square of baize. "This is my site." He says to the audience. "My bit of land. I'm waiting till values go up." Values go up. More and more people come and sit on his bit of baize. His rents rise. We see the growth of the town, the change of fashion in neighbourhoods, the growth of slums. We see commissions of enquiry, hear debates in the Senate and Congress, Housing Laws passed. But this grim tenement in the background continues. It is not changed. A man gets up out of the audience. "Look here," he says to the megaphone. "I don't follow that last bit. They said in that law that five people



couldn't live in a room twelve by six. Why is it still happening in this building?" "Let's see," says the megaphone, and the process of law-evasion is shewn in a scene. Gradually the whole history of slum-property is unlaidd, with the man from the audience continually interrupting and asking the sort of questions that are coming into the minds of the audience. We get to the present time, the allotment for slum clearance, how much that will amount to for New York State, how much for New York City. At the present rate, announces the megaphone, to clear the present slums from New York will take 200 years.

It sounds at first as if a problem like Housing, Power, or Judicial Corruption would be very refractory dramatic material. The issues involved are very complex economic and financial ones. How can this difficulty be overcome?

It is done by reducing the problems to their simplest dramatic terms. Take this for example to illustrate the relation of Farmer Middleman and Consumer.

The Farmer: (handing a can of milk to the Middleman) How much do I get?

The Middleman: Three cents.

The Farmer: Three cents?

The Middleman: Take it or leave it.

Farmer: (handing over milk) I'll take it.

Woman Customer: I want a quart of milk.

Middleman: (pouring milk from can into bottle) Fifteen cents.

Woman Customer: Fifteen cents?

Middleman: Take it or leave it.

Woman Customer: I'll take it.

This reduction to simple terms, the variation of levels between the actors on the stage, the loud-speaker voice, the questioner, an intricate lighting system, clever orchestration and the use of cinema films make the Living Newspaper the most dynamic method of instruction and one of the most dramatic stage productions that I have ever seen. They are propagandist, as some of the finest art from Brueghel to Swift has been propagandist. But their material is documented as carefully as the finest work of historical research. Twenty-five writers were at work compiling the material for "*. . . one third of a nation . . .*" before Mr. Arthur Arend dramatized it. There is chapter and verse for every historical statement made: the speeches put into the mouths of historical characters are verbatim: and where controversial statements are made, these

are supported by evidence which can be seen at the offices of the Living Newspaper. In this last production, certain senators who had opposed the Housing Bill protested against their being represented on the stage and their words held up to ridicule. It was an insult to the Administration, they said, that they should be pilloried by an organization financed by the Administration itself. The obvious retort was made. If senators did not want to be made ridiculous, they should not make ridiculous speeches.

If there need be further evidence of the success of the Living Newspaper, there is the story which was going round New York when I was there. One evening a man went up to the Box-office. "I want a seat for to-night," he said. "I'm sorry, it's full," said the girl. "We've turned three hundred people away." "But I'm Fredric March," said the man. "Maybe," the girl answered, "But it's still full."

The two lessons which we have to learn from the Federal Theatre Project are these: if theatre prices are reduced, a wider public will be drawn into the theatres: and the influence of this wider public will be to demand more vital plays. I myself look forward to the time when we shall have politicians who do not despise the creative workers in the State, and who will introduce a scheme, similar to the Federal Theatre Project, but adapted to our needs.

The theatrical prospect in New York, with the International Garment Workers Union staging a smash revue, and the Federal Theatre playing to full houses and commercial Broadway trying hard to keep up—all this may seem very different from the theatrical prospect in London. But in the fact that the Unity Theatre has just staged its first Living Newspaper, *Busmen*, and in the other signs I have given above, I see every indication that the theatrical renaissance is about to start in England. The public is ready. The plays are there. We are waiting for a commercial producer with the acumen to take a chance, a chance which in fact is less of a gamble than most theatrical ventures. If once that initiative comes, we shall see how quickly it spreads down Shaftesbury Avenue, bringing new life to an institution that otherwise were better dead and buried.

## CHINA AND SOCIAL CHANGE

BY WILBUR BURTON

THROUGHOUT the various phases of the Chinese Revolution, there is one change which has continued unabated. That is the emancipation of women towards a position of equality with men, and a sweeping general change, accordingly, in social *mores*.

Meiling Soong, the wife of Chiang Kai-Shek, is probably his sole confidant and is certainly his chief adviser. Western-educated, in the United States, she knows the West as he does not, and she is believed to have been primarily responsible both for many negotiations with Western countries and much adoption of Western technique that have been the major factors in his political success. Their marriage in 1928 was very significant of social change in China. For her he put away his wife of the time and his concubines—all acquired by old-fashioned traditions—and the marriage was the antithesis of the classical family alliance. She could not, however, obtain the services of a pastor of her faith, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South U.S.A., to officiate at the ceremony, since General Chiang's marital status was so complicated from the Christian viewpoint; but it was a Christian wedding, nevertheless, with a Chinese Y.M.C.A. secretary in charge. Later, General Chiang joined the Methodist church and has since been in its very good graces.

Mrs. Kung, eldest of the three famous sisters, is, as is well known, the "brain trust" of the Ministry of Finance which her husband, a former Y.M.C.A. secretary, heads. She is distinguished chiefly in Shanghai as an expert exchange manipulator, and is generally credited with being the equal of her brother, T. V. Soong, former Finance Minister, in the intricacies of economics.

While Mrs. Chiang and Mrs. Kung have no *official* executive positions, they are both members of the upper Kuomintang



clique by which the Nanking Government was founded. Mrs. Sun Yat Sen, too, was a member of this group and was given every encouragement to participate actively in it. But she chose to go Left when the rest of her family went Right. Like the rest of her family, she was given an American Christian education—the father, Charles James Soong, was a sailor from an island near Hongkong, who became a *protégé* of American missionaries—but she began to break with Christianity in her marriage to Dr. Sun. He, too, was a Christian, but that did not prevent him from abandoning his first wife in order to contract an entirely informal alliance with Chingling Soong in 1915. This caused the missionaries to become cool to both. One biographer of Dr. Sun, Mrs. Lyon Sharman, credits Chingling with much of Dr. Sun's subsequent orientation toward Moscow. When he died in 1925, however, virtually in the arms of Moscow, she arranged a Christian funeral for him. Later, she was an outstanding figure in the near-Red Wuhan *régime* of 1926-27, and after that she issued successive Bolshevik manifestoes over her name against the government of her brother-in-law, General Chiang. As the recognized widow of Dr. Sun, even though his first wife is still living, she enjoys a unique immunity—but effective censorship prevented her Moscow-inspired propaganda from reaching any Chinese excepting the English-reading intelligentsia of Shanghai.

Another example of Christianity-*cum*-Communism is a woman who held an important technical position in a Nanking Government office when I knew her. I shall call her merely Miss X, for she is without immunity. Her father was a Buddhist, a magistrate and an opium smoker who, through personal friendship with a fundamentalist missionary, sent her and her two brothers to the missionary's school in a Chinese interior city.

"We spent two hours a day in Bible study," she told me. "The Bible was translated into very poor Chinese, while the Buddhist scriptures were in beautiful Chinese, but by reading the Chinese and English Bibles together, I was able to learn a lot of English. Once the dean caught me doing this, and scolded me severely, because he thought I was more interested in learning the English language than in studying religion—which was true.

"You are stealing time from God Who gave you your mind," he said, "and if you cheat Him, He will take away your mind."

Later, she became a teacher in the school, but had a fight over an additional room for her mother with Mrs. Y, the missionary's wife and second in command. Mrs. Y declared that Christians should live simply, and one room was enough for mother and daughter.

"You don't live so simply," flared Miss X. "You have a large foreign-style house, and a half-dozen servants, while Chinese around you live in poverty. And, if you were back in the United States, you would have to do your own cooking and washing."

Wherefore, Mrs. Y concluded Miss X had become a "dangerous radical", and this ended her Christian life.

"I learned to think from the missionaries," Miss X concluded, "for in teaching me that the old Chinese way of life was wrong, they taught me to question their own way and other things as well."—M. Le Bon would have found confirmation here of his theories of social psychology. Miss X, when I knew her, had developed from Christianity to Trotskyist Communism. One of her brothers, subjected to the same influences, was a Bohemian man-about-town. The other, however, was a Christian evangelist.

There are many, men and women, in Nanking service who do not share its political ideology. Most, of course, illustrate the adage that "where thy treasure is, there also is thy heart." And Nanking's treasure is so amenable to feminine wiles these days that a Chinese writing under the name of T. S. Young, once complained bitterly and at length in the *China Weekly Review* that he could not get a good Government job because he was married to an old-fashioned girl. "The secret of success of many of my friends," he said, "is not due so much to their competence and education as to the fact that their wives can secure 'inside pulls' for them." And he proceeded to list many instances to prove his point. Certainly, the whole atmosphere, in so far as women are concerned, is ultra-modern, and the wife who cannot fit in is a handicap to her husband.

This inevitably leads to abuses, but is more potent than any laws could be in furthering feminine emancipation generally.

Nanking's laws with regard to women are also quite modern, even male adultery and the taking of concubines now being forbidden, but as laws they are not enforced. However, in the upper circles, a modern wife is deemed an asset—and a modern wife does not allow her husband to take concubines. The moral standard otherwise is very liberal : what is sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose. In old China feminine adultery—the only legal adultery—was punished by death. Among all modern girls, of course, family marriage is ended and romantic love cultivated.

Here is where the American cinema, the third great influence of social change, has played its greatest rôle. The influence of Christianity-*cum*-cinema may be best shown by the story of Fu-yah. She was the daughter of an old-fashioned scholar who was sufficiently caught up in the modern milieu to give her an education. To economize, he sent her to a virtually free Catholic school—but became very indignant when the Catholics succeeded in converting her to the Roman faith. So he withdrew her from school at sixteen for an old-fashioned family marriage.

“ I did not object,” she told me several years later, “ for it was Chinese custom. I never saw my husband until the day before we were married. He seemed to be a very nice man, and he was wealthy, and I intended to make him a perfect wife. I thought my education would help me do that. But I was not happy ; something seemed lacking. He never made love to me. No, not even when we had sexual relations. In the cinema, I saw foreigners always making love, kissing their sweethearts passionately, and I wanted my husband to take me in his arms and kiss me. But he never kissed me once. I asked him once why he didn't, and he said only the foreign barbarians did that. Yes, old-fashioned Chinese men did kiss women sometimes but usually not their wives. They also made love, at least a little bit, to sing-song girls, but not to their wives. And I began to think foreign women were better off than we were.”

Since Fu-yah displayed a high order of musical ability, she inveigled her husband into sending her to Paris for education in a *conservatoire*. There, according to her story, she also “ found out what love really was, and it was divine.” Upon return to



China, she found her husband engaged in an affair with another woman, so she left him for another man. From that episode came two children and a complete break with her family. When I knew her, she was making a rather precarious living teaching music, French and English, to Chinese and Chinese to foreigners, but she seemed to have no regrets. "There are often hard-times and heart-break," she said, "but it has been worth-while."

In one aspect of social progress, China is ahead of most Western countries. That is in divorce by mutual consent, and without any delay. There need not even be the formality of court procedure; a bill of divorcement is simply drawn up by the two parties in the presence of witnesses. On the other hand, recognition of the principle of equality of the sexes in the new divorce laws has removed one former ground for divorce—barrenness—and makes the dissolution of marriage extremely difficult when one of the parties opposes. This has often led to tragedy where a man mated in his youth by his family to an old-fashioned woman has sought to break away to wed someone more compatible.

In other cases, there is a more forthright solution: the couple live together openly. There is not only no law against it, but no social stigma is attached in modern circles, outside those that take Christianity seriously, nor are children of such a union branded as illegitimate; in new as well as old Chinese custom, any paternally recognized child is legitimate.

The social emancipation I have described cannot, obviously, have much meaning among the masses of poverty-stricken, but at least the principle of free choice in marriage has penetrated deeply everywhere. I found it even in villages of remote and backward Yunnan a few years ago. And while there was no feminine influence in the old-fashioned provincial *yamen* there was an intriguing feminist quirk of girls selling themselves to wealthy men instead of, as formerly, being sold by their parents. Often the sale was for a limited period to pay for an education.

Further, feminism everywhere has opened up new lines of work for women. In all China before 1930, there was scarcely a feminine clerk in stores; to-day there are thousands. Only within the last three years have there been any feminine

waitresses in restaurants. Progress is slow, but steady, in the professional field. In that oldest of professions, the most pitiful street walker and the most glamorous sing-song girl formerly were slaves—that is, sold for a period, usually ten years, to a procurer to do with as he liked. To-day, most of the outright prostitutes are still slaves, but the rise of cabarets with largely free girls as “taxi-dancers” has caused the sing-song institution—and prostitution generally—to decline tremendously.

Ten years ago there was not one Chinese taxi-dancer in China. The cabarets in Shanghai, and elsewhere, were staffed chiefly by Russian girls and patronized almost entirely by foreigners. To-day there are hundreds of cabarets with only Chinese taxi-dancers and patronized almost exclusively by Chinese. These taxi-dancers are almost always free girls, and they demand and receive gallant attention that is new to the Celestial scene. Their social significance transcends alike their numbers and perhaps somewhat questionable morals, for they are both symbols and pioneers on another social level of the changed attitude illustrated higher up by the Soong sisters.

Not only in classical China were marriages strictly family affairs, women generally subordinate to men, and a lack of any concept of romantic love, but also there was an attitude to femininity without counterpart elsewhere save among the Hindus and some of the early Christian Church fathers who characterized women as “an obnoxious species.” There was no sense of sin with regard to sex such as we find among the Hindus and Christians, but there was the concept of the feminine sex as vile. The character for woman or its radical form is a part of practically all expressions in the Chinese language for everything regarded as weak or bad. Chinese philosophy was similarly predicated. On the other hand—indicating the prevailing idea of the only exalted function of women—the character for “good” consists of a woman with a child. And sexual relations were regarded as solely either for reproduction or the physical relief of the male. In practice, to be sure, there were some exceptions to all this, but in the main women received no consideration either as persons or as objects of love; their only rôles in life were passive prostitution, household slavery and efficient motherhood.

The position of Chinese women was perhaps slightly higher than that of women in India. At least there was no *purdah*, but Indian literature would indicate a somewhat less one-sided idea of sexual relations than existed in China. Japanese women were as subordinated to men as Chinese women, but the Japanese did have a pronounced concept of romantic love, and in feudal times the women in Japan were often better educated than the men. In both China and India, education was regarded as the ruination of women. And with Japan's adoption of Confucianism, the position of women there became lower than it had traditionally been. In the Malayan areas, women were always relatively free compared to China, Japan and India, nor did the introduction of Mohammedanism with its veils and *purdah* change this state of affairs; indeed, veils and *purdahs* were genially neglected.

In view of the fact that all the areas of Asia have in the last century—longer in India—been subjected to approximately the same amount of Western influence, the contrast to-day between China and the other regions in social emancipation is very striking. The changes in Malaysia, especially the extensive Americanization of the Philippines, have not been fundamental, for there was nothing fundamental to change in this direction. In Japan, the same Western leaven—Christian, communistic and cinematic—as in China has had a pronounced effect among both the intelligentsia and the masses, but the government there has done its best to maintain the Confucian *mores*—despite extensive modernization of the country in purely material lines. To this day, for example, almost all marriages in Japan are family affairs, and the government is doing its best to prevent free social intercourse between the sexes. And the Japanese official Puritans view with alarm the decline in the popularity of the *yoshiwara* (quasi-government prostitution quarters) because of the rise of beer-halls with feminine waitresses.

Nor has much social emancipation been achieved in India, but the government is not here to blame. There has been no external force to prevent the Indians from adopting any social ideas that would break down either subordination of women or the caste system, but neither has taken place to any appreciable degree. The most striking contrast when one travels



through China and India is the social modernization that has taken place in the land under Oriental dictatorship compared to that in the land under relatively enlightened Western government. I can only conclude that the Indians are substantially inhibited by their fanatical traditions.

If China, of course, had had as strong a government as Japan during the past century, the two lands would probably be much the same socially. But neither suffers from the fanaticism of Indian civilization. The Japanese ruling class oppose social change, because they fear it will lead to political and economic change. The old ruling class in China thought similarly, but was never strong enough to curb developments. The ruling class that rose to power in 1927 with the triumph of Chiang Kai-shek was in itself largely a product of the social change during the previous three decades, and that is why it has not been reactionary in attempting to prevent further social change that does not tend leftward politically and economically—and censorship, applicable equally to both of the sexes, has been designed to prevent this. In any event, China (through absence of a strong government) was so long exposed to the unchecked propaganda of Christian missionaries and Communists alike, besides the cinema, which was equally subversive from the old-fashioned viewpoint, that it would require a more powerful government than yet exists to halt the march of at least ideological emancipation.

In conclusion, it is perhaps illuminating to point out that from the standpoint of the old-fashioned, all the social change described—from free choice in marriage to free love and women living in adultery—is equally deplorable. A Celestial papa who stands upon his Confucian rights of selecting a husband for his daughter can see no difference in her flouting him to marry a man of her choice than to live *sans* marriage with a man of her choice; the question involved is not the sin of unhallowed sexual relations, but the offence to filial piety.

## EBB AND FLOW

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

**H**OW careless the English are of their leading figures. King George went to open the great Exhibition in Glasgow, and there are plenty of extreme politicians, even revolutionaries, on Clydeside—yet very few precautions, if any, were used to avoid the chance of a bomb or revolver shot. Now, when one dictator goes to be received by another, things are meticulously done. Every possible window where a machine-gun might be placed along the innumerable houses past which the German demi-god would process was investigated and guarded—successfully. Italians have been able to give full vent to the rejoicing over the fact that Germans are in friendly contact with them on the Brenner; and all the world has heard the noise of acclamation when hero met hero in the Eternal City.

**Of Heroes  
and Heroics**

I notice that a popular young English writer (though Mr. Beverley Nichols is not quite so aggressively youthful as he began by being) writes a book lamenting that "England is a country without a hero." He has made search and cannot find one, except Sir Oswald Mosley. There would be no such difficulty in Germany or Italy where the heroes are perpetually at the loud speaker or in front of the film camera; and in Russia, Stalin, though reticent and retiring by comparison, is not easily overlooked. With great respect, I would suggest to Mr. Nichols that England is not so badly off as he thinks. How many heroes would he find in Switzerland, a country which in any survey of comparative excellence is entitled to very high marks? Yet, as all the world admits, what Swiss is there whose name is so widely known outside his own land, or commands such personal allegiance in it, as, for instance, Mr. de Valera. When a country is really well off, when it does not feel called upon for any abnormal effort, the absence of

professional, officially-recognized heroes, is a good sign. Nobody is very conspicuous because everybody's job is being done by everybody—as throughout most of civil life in the case of England.

We in Ireland have had long experience of the need for heroes, which carried as a corollary the need for personal submission. In so long an uphill fight, instinct and experience pointed to the acceptance of leadership; many of us can remember how Parnell was followed, how even his lieutenants O'Brien, Dillon, Redmond and Healy were followed, with almost blind allegiance. The price to be paid for leadership was a surrender of private judgment; and while the struggle lasted I think Ireland did well to pay it. Mr. de Valera benefited by their tradition; but I am not sure that since Ireland acquired self-government the tradition was wholly for the good of Ireland. One of my friends described to me how he set before an Irish farmer the economic consequences of Mr. de Valera's policy—more specially as affecting the farmers. The man listened and said, "I know all you are telling me, and I admit it; but do you know my answer to those arguments—'Up Dev!'" That was the equivalent for "Heil Hitler." But nobody was going to put that man in a concentration camp if he did not say "Up Dev!" Heroes of the type to which we have been accustomed in Ireland are comparatively innocuous: Ireland can go back on them and has used that privilege, not always with discretion. But the hero who is maintained on his pedestal by a concentration of machine-guns appears to me an unenviable possession for the country that put him there. All the noises and trumpetings, all the triumphal arches, are nothing but a celebration of the slave State—into which enters a deplorable amount of hysteria, but a deadlier element is the enforced hypocrisy. One of the celebrations consisted in the public burning at Vienna of some two thousand books because they were by Jewish authors. When you have such an outrage on all that civilization stands for, there will be found inevitably acts of wild and brutalizing oppression. Herr Hitler's gift to his native country has been an orgy of organized mob-law.

Meantime Mr. Chamberlain, whom Mr. Nichols would not recognize for a hero (and indeed he has none of the flamboyancy)



gathers in a crop of golden opinions from the unlikeliest soil, that of Ireland. But not only from Ireland, I  
**Good News** am glad to see ; a Unionist member in the House  
**from**  
**Ireland** of Commons explained that he could not bring himself to condemn by vote the Italian agreement because at the same moment Mr. Chamberlain was making this other auspicious pact. Mr. Churchill has done Mr. de Valera great service by attacking the terms as a surrender of important advantages for no solid equivalent. It would be interesting to hear how much value the treaty ports would have been in time of war without command of the surrounding areas, and how this command could have been exercised without a military campaign in Cork and in Donegal. Is it, after all, contrary to the spirit of the British Commonwealth that you propose to come to a working union by abolishing all obligatory links ?

One thing may be significant. Not only has a first President for Eire been chosen with enthusiastic unanimity, but it is now settled that the former Viceregal Lodge should be reopened for his residence. The first proposal was to use for this purpose the former Chief Secretary's Lodge, in which the American Legation has been housed since it was established. But now Dr. Douglas Hyde will represent Ireland where so many British peers (from about 1800) represented British sovereigns, and where after the Treaty of 1921, first Mr. T. M. Healy, and then Mr. James MacNeill, represented King George V. The place has a long history. It was built as a private dwelling for Mr. Clements who afterwards became the first Lord Leitrim ; Government bought it from him to be the Viceroy's country seat, but then proposed to give it to Grattan when the Irish parliament was rewarding him for wresting independence from England. So far back as a long memory goes, Nationalists avoided the place, but in 1917 when the Irish Convention was attempting a settlement under Sir Horace Plunkett's guidance, some of us went there and saw how brilliant the rooms could be made with Lord and Lady Wimborne for host and hostess. After them, Lord French of Ypres was established there : an unhappy memory, for if ever there was a distinguished Irish soldier fitted by nature to be happy and admired in his own country, Lord French in any normal times would have been that man : but

he was constrained to live there as if in a military G.H.Q. After the revolution Mr. Healy was only camped in the great house but his successor and Mrs. MacNeill made it a place of gracious hospitality. Since their day it has been closed; and it is difficult for anyone not bred in Ireland to realize how glad an Irishman can be to know that it will reopen to receive a President of whom every Irishman can feel proud.

Since Parnell, no man has been more widely known in Ireland than Douglas Hyde; but there is this difference; he has had no enemies, he has made no feuds. The Gaelic League grew

**The New  
President  
of Eire**

up under his guidance in the decade of political bickering and disgust which followed Parnell's death; and for twenty years, while he nursed it as a

growing force, he did his utmost to keep it unpolitical. Ulster's arming defeated him; the counter-movement of Irish Volunteers really sprang from the Gaelic League, and Hyde retired from the presidency—not, I think, because he disapproved of the arming but because he was pledged in honour to keep the League out of politics. He had won some astonishing recruits: for instance a noted Presbyterian divine, often spoken of as “Roaring Kane.” But when Dr. Kane was asked how he could justify his membership of the Gaelic League, he answered that he was a Protestant Unionist and an Orangeman, but would never forget that he was an O’Cahan. I remember a Féis in the Glens of Antrim where Horace Plunkett was a chief figure, but so were certain Belfast potentates of the truest blue—and so also—*sunt lacrimae rerum*—was Roger Casement, in all the splendour of his superb manhood. Hyde did all a man could do to make the Gaelic League a rallying-point for all kinds of Irishmen and Irish women; and whether he spoke in Irish or in English, his power of winning an audience, or an individual, was extraordinary. Son of a country rector, bred up in Roscommon where it borders on Mayo, he went to Trinity, intended for the Church, and passed through the divinity school—winning also the prize poem and I know not what other distinctions; in addition to his scholarship in Latin and Greek he was qualified to hold a post as professor of modern languages for some time at a Canadian university. Far away back in the eighties, a group of young men used to assemble at Professor Dowden's house;

Yeats, a black-haired untidy wisp of a lad, but already recognized for what he would become ; and Hyde, a few years older, also stood out in that group, most of whom made their names remembered—at all events in Ireland—Taylor, Rolleston, T. W. Lyster, Litton Falkiner, Charles and Walter Osborne, Oldham, and, I think, Best. AE. may have been there too. In short, it was the group which Moore found established later and sketched in his *Ave and Vale*. Nobody in it ever doubted that Hyde counted for as much as any : Yeats always held that Hyde was a poet sacrificed to a movement. Any time from 1900 onwards, Hyde could gather as big a crowd to cheer and support him as the official party leaders : he could go to America and bring back funds for his movement, but Dublin and its cōteries saw little of him ; for, whenever he could, he slipped away to his old home in Roscommon. The Rectory, like other rectories in parts where Protestants are scarce, had come into the market, and he has really lived all his life in one house ; all his life he has shot snipe in the bogs about it, and is in the full freemasonry of that sport. Now, he is to be dragged out, installed in a palace and, instead of driving himself dangerously in an elderly Ford, will have a suitable and doubtless a Gaelic-speaking chauffeur. In a way I am sorry for an old friend ; but for Ireland more glad than words can say. Poland could choose Paderewski ; Czechoslovakia had Masaryk ; Ireland, when Ireland comes to be ceremonially represented with a man of her choice, can produce one whose achievement may be ranked with theirs. For the Gaelic League, whether Hyde intended it or no, has been largely if not mainly responsible in the course of events which have put Mr. de Valera negotiating on terms of equality with Mr. Chamberlain—and, by a side wind, have brought Hyde himself into the Viceregal Lodge. Happily, his arrival there will be regarded, even in Ulster, as part of a general pacification.

I note two more things : one a strong appeal from Mr. St. John Ervine—so aggressively an Ulsterman—for a movement among all Irishmen of good will to end partition. That must be a slow business, though the appeal is welcome. The other concerns what can be immediately accomplished. Mr. Chamberlain has done much

The Lane  
Bequest



with help that is widely acknowledged from Mr. MacDonald—whose praise I have read with pleasure, and wish that it could reach to his father—and from the High Commissioner, Mr. Dulanty, probably the pivot of the whole. They have changed the feeling between England and Ireland. Now, for my second observation. Mr. MacColl comes forward with a plea that the thirty-nine pictures left by the codicil of Hugh Lane's will to the Dublin Municipal Gallery should be handed over from the London National Gallery and the Tate, to which the body of the will bequeathed them. The codicil being unwitnessed was legally invalid : Lane went down with the *Lusitania*. A Committee of the House of Commons, over which Major J. W. Hills presided, was appointed to enquire if the codicil represented Lane's real intentions. They found that it did represent them, but advised that London should retain the pictures. There has naturally been much resentment in Ireland, especially among the people like Yeats and Lady Gregory who were attached to Lane, and aware of the artistic value of these treasures. In England many—among them Mr. MacColl was chief—concurred in the Committee's advice. Now Mr. MacColl thinks that in the interest of international good feeling the British Government should pass an Act enabling it to carry out what have been recognized as the intentions of an Irishman who was a lavish benefactor to many galleries, both in Ireland and outside of Ireland. Charlemont House, where the Municipal Collection that Lane started is now finely and most appropriately housed, has a room set apart for them. I hope that their places on its walls may not long stay empty.

Royal Academicians should take to heart the Scottish minister's wisdom—"In the day of judgment, my friends, every herring maun hang by its ain tail." If Kipling had proposed to

**The 1938** abandon the Macmillans because they refused to  
**Royal** publish, let us say, Joyce—as they might well have  
**Academy** done—I don't think literature would have gained.

The Academy is so admirably English that it could be a pity to interfere with its functions and functioning. As well abolish the City Corporations. But one must admit, after visiting the show, that it is hard to guess why they turned down the portrait of a very distinguished poet by an artist who is certainly

accomplished ; for the mediocrity of pictures hung above the line this year is rather distressing : and the portrait in question had, to judge by the photographs reproduced, none of the distortions which are more fashionable than academic. It looks as if the brightest talents outside the pale were avoiding the chance of rejection. Still, Mr. Alan Blyth's "Coronation Fantasy" was an amusing and charming piece of invention skilfully carried out and Mr. R. C. Weatherby's "The Noble Science" (also skied) has a deal of life and vigour. Of the outsiders who are hung on the line, Mr. Walter Goodin has a fine study of the river at Beverley with hulls of ships in the skeleton stage of growth ; and Mr. Christopher Nevinson paints another tidal river "Winding slowly to the Sea" in a majestic and most satisfying curve. This indeed is one of the pictures which would be the glory of a good-sized house : but then Mr. Nevinson though not an Academician, is at least as well known as many who are.

But the Academicians themselves this year make a very creditable showing. In the first room (which almost always makes a good introduction) there is Mr. Harold Knight's painting of "A Student" bought by the Chantrey Bequest—work in the rather chilly tradition of Ingres ; but next to it is Mr. Bishop's study of "An Alley in Kairouan," violent sunlight streaming through openings in a roofed space : the whole thing quivers with golden dust: you could thaw frozen fingers at it. Then there are two very attractive yachting scenes by Sir Walter Russell, and between them Mr. Bateman's characteristically English study of a cattle market : not so stylized as some of his earlier pictures, more literal ; the white bull being hustled out of a lorry is observed with a delighted humour, as well as with all the feeling for his strength. All the accessory figures human or four-footed, complete the scene. Then there is Mr. Munnings, and in the painting of a young rider on "Davy Jones," one figure among the lookers on has surprising vitality ; nothing could express better the concentration of knowingness. This, I was told, represents Mr. Munnings himself. Orpen often put himself into a picture with the same kind of glee. "This is me being the complete horse-coper," Mr. Munnings seems to say.

Steer's beautiful picture of Ludlow is in this room also, one of the Chantrey purchases. Steer, it has to be admitted, never had any truck with the Academy. But one of its veterans, **The Quality of Sir John Lavery**, has in this room a study of "Academic" "The Chamber Music Society by Candlelight"

**Art** which is simply astonishing. The complainants affirm that academic art is only photography in colour. Well we have all seen photographs of scenes like this and they are like nothing earthly, while here, is the subdued light, we seem almost to see the audience breathing; the flickering movement is over all; the scene is perfectly represented and yet no single figure can be said to be actually drawn. In another room the same artist paints a bathing-pool in Florida and—with a daub of paint here and a daub of paint there—suggests the whole movement and proportion of a swimmer seen in sunlit water. These things do precisely what photography cannot do—they make a living scene present in sensation, harmonizing it into a scheme of colour. It is only hysteria to go on shrieking that all the vitality of art is outside the Academy.

Again there is Mr. Oliver Hall's "Rannoch Moor," a most satisfactory rendering of Scottish landscape in low tones of brown and grey—thorough craftsmanship. In the same room hangs Mr. Algernon Newton's "Summer," a small picture but it seems to have more space in it than almost any other in the exhibition; and the three nude figures of women bathing are exquisitely placed and exquisitely drawn. Human nakedness is a great ornament to a landscape, if seen far enough off. In sculpture the nude is much less embarrassing—witness Lady Kennett's figure under the central dome which she calls "England." The title is a little surprising: for England is a young man, standing on tiptoe with the flowing line of his muscles all tense as a strung bow. However one calls it, here is a beautiful and vital piece of work—and yet academic, though not by an academician. Another aspect of the same artist's talent is seen in the head of Sir Montagu Norman. The Governor of the Bank of England is shown here as a man who might easily be taken for a philosopher, a writer, a connoisseur, but is singularly unlike those portraits of business men by which the City pages of *The Times* give confidence to investors.



Another lady, Gertrude Hermes, has done a remarkably good head of Mr. Conrad Noel. Like other visitors I was amused by Miss Louise Hodgson's picture in tempera, "The Birth of Venus" But I think Dame Laura Knight, for instance, would have made quite clear to herself what kind of net fetched in that surprising catch. This one is not a trawl, and apparently is a drift net, for it has herring and mackerel sticking in it, meshed by the gills. That buxom lady could not have been so entangled. But I have seen a twelve-foot shark brought ashore in a herring net—and a dreadful mess he had made of it. Dame Laura's strong realism might have shown this other kind of danger shining through many wrappings of mesh. Miss Hodgson has, at any rate, managed to get on to the canvas all her own amusement in the scene which she has conjured up—and that is what really matters.

*Just published*

A NEW COTSWOLD BOOK

## TWO IN A VALLEY

*By*

Stephen Gwynn and Ray Beddington

"The Coln valley in the Cotswolds is the valley of the title. Mr. Gwynn's pen and Mr. Beddington's brush and pencil have fittingly recorded its beauties. It has something for all who love the beauties of the Cotswolds. It makes a good book."

HOWARD SPRING in the *EVENING STANDARD*

*Fully illustrated*

7s. 6d. net

## PARADE OF TIME

*An Anthology Edited by*

E. W. Martin

Selected from the pens of such writers as R. L. Stevenson, Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch, Joseph Conrad, Naomi Mitchison, Margaret Irwin, and other eminent modern authors.

"It is a very good collection. The authors' names are guarantee enough that each of these episodes is well handled."

*EVENING STANDARD*

*Illustrated*

8s. 6d. net

RICH & COWAN, 37 BEDFORD SQ., LONDON, W.C.1

# THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

## BRITAIN'S CHOICE

By WICKHAM STEED.

UNTO CAESAR, by F. A. Voigt.  
*Constable. 10s.*

THE WORLD'S DESIGN, by Salvador de Madariaga. *George Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.*

If our public men, including those who are duty as statesmen, could read and think over these two books they might grow wiser. In both there is learning and—what is by no means the same thing—knowledge. In Señor Madariaga's work there is also experience. Should anyone essay to read the two, Mr. Voigt's "Unto Cæsar" ought to be taken first. Otherwise it might not be read at all. Parts of it are so ambiguously phrased as to exasperate simple folk who, in their simplicity, may fancy that language is meant to be readily understood. For if Señor Madariaga's "The World's Design" be taken first, the rare brilliance of his English and the apt beauty of his style will make much, though not all, of Mr. Voigt's phraseology seem turgid and labour by comparison.

How many of Mr. Voigt's paragraphs, indeed, pages might he not have economized, had he hit upon Madariaga's luminous definition of Fascism as the image of Communism on the waters of fear! Mr. Voigt knows what he wants to say and, when hard pressed, can say it clearly; but when he has time to write as he pleases he falls into a philosophical jargon that obscures his meaning. In his Prefatory Note," written on March

25th, and therefore "rushed" for inclusion in a book published at the beginning of April, he states with admirable lucidity the position arising from the union of Germany and Austria. But what is one to make of a passage like the following which occurs in a comparison of Hitler with Lenin?

"Hitler is not so explicitly chiliaristic as Lenin, nor has he Lenin's naïve faith in the goodness of man as such. Nevertheless, chiliarism underlies his vision of the German "blood-brotherhood" which will shed essential evil by being purged of alien racial strains and will embody in its own domination the domination of all manly and resplendent virtues"

and

"Hitler rejects the Christian conception of sin just as the Marxists do. Hitler's whole teaching implies disbelief in the sinfulness of all men. The elect, the men and women of Aryan race, who will form the future blood-brotherhood are not under sin. They are not merely men and women with special virtues, they are the repositories of virtue itself. The Aryan, like the Proletarian, is sinless."

Throughout his book Mr. Voigt's standpoint is that of a Christian dogmatist who clings to the doctrine of "Original Sin" and insists that the Kingdom of God is not of this world. Most of the chapters read like erudite, analytical, controversial sermons; and his criticism of Marxism and Nazism may be summed up in the by no means simple lines: "The fulfilment of Marxian and National Socialist eschatology, of their chiliaristic mythological vision, is in *this world*."

I wish that someone less learned than he could put his book into plain comprehensible English, bringing into the text all the bewildering notes at the end of the volume and cutting out the not less bewildering abbreviations that serve as a preface to them. Then the book might do much good to the very people who would profit most by reading it but whom Mr. Voigt's unhurried, pedantic style may "put off." They would then understand the truth he means to convey in his concluding passage :—

England is in danger. Her spiritual life is threatened by the Hybris of secular religion. Her material existence is menaced by the greatest military power in the world. Unless she is strong, the men of the Third Realm will be to her as the Athenians were to the men of Melos, whose fate will be hers.

England lives under the inexorable necessity of being strong in armed defence :

"And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city, for God did vex them with all adversity.

"Be ye strong, therefore, and let not your hands be weak : for your work shall be rewarded."

In effect Mr. Voigt says to England : 'Be strong and sane. You are threatened by people with swelled heads and swollen minds. Hold fast to your freedom and be ready to fight for it. Cling to your Christian ethic, which is good. Let your religion be other-worldly but keep your politics this-worldly ; for, were the light of England put out, darkness would reign.'

Don Salvador de Madariaga would have England do more than this. Like Mr. Voigt he sees Great Britain as "the centre of the picture." Her people, he writes :—

tucked away in their little island . . . yet admirably placed for the strategies of war and peace, at the confluence of sea-routes, warming their feet at the Gulf-Stream, and cooling their heads at the polar winds, coming closest to Europe just opposite the point where the frontier between Latin and Teuton cultures touches the sea ; this people, a Europe unto themselves,

a family tree with Iberian, Scandinavian, French and Teutonic roots, their race samples, their climate samples, their mind—empirical and positive—samples, country gentlemen and sailors, bold adventurers and cautious tradesmen, Quixotic and hard bargainers, Bible preachers and rum-runners, "lovers of the under-dog, provided it be a dog," masterful yet the most reasonable of masters, brotherly yet steel-cold, lovers of earth yet spritely and even angelic, living paradoxes, candid enigmas, the most insular and the most universal of human beings—the British people are, in our twentieth century, the norm of the world.

England is a model nation, in fact the model nation whose future will be governed by her readiness or failure to discharge the twin obligations—*noblesse oblige* and *richesse oblige*. England is the leader in the British Commonwealth. Centuries of life in island security have enabled her to work out the principles on which alone a World Commonwealth can be built up. She must lead the nations into a World Commonwealth, under a New Covenant of a New League, by grasping and acting upon the truth that without a spirit of world citizenship the nations may be plunged into an age of woe. "So," Madariaga writes, "the main responsibility is that of Great Britain. Not in vain does she control the lion's share of the world. Not in vain has she been endowed with an unusual amount of political talent. Not in vain has she been allowed centuries of insular concentration, so that the collective virtues which she has cultivated in her island of peace should be spread by her over the whole world when the time for universality was ripe. Not in vain is it assumed everywhere, even where it is not said, even where it is not liked, that the main responsibility is hers."

Between them and together Mr. Voigt and Don Salvador de Madariaga define in their several ways what I, too, believe to be Britain's choice.



## SCANDINAVIA

By GEORGE SOLOVEYCHIK

**DENMARK IN HISTORY**, by J. H. S. Birch. *Murray*. 15s.

**THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES IN WORLD ECONOMY**. Published by the Delegations for the Promotion of Economic co-operation between the Northern Countries.

"Scandinavia" is a portmanteau expression frequently used to describe not only the actually Scandinavian countries, but Finland and, of late, Iceland as well. They themselves rather dislike the word and prefer the somewhat clumsy appellation of "the Northern Countries" or "the countries of Northern Europe," which is really too vague and too elastic a notion. So they must forgive me if I stick to the more expressive and familiar word which sums them up as a unit.

The combined population of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden is only 16½ million souls. Yet, taken together, these countries are Great Britain's best customer, both in Europe and in the world, as well as her second largest source of supply, being exceeded in this respect only by the U.S.A.

That fact alone should suffice to establish Scandinavia's permanent claim on our attention. But not only are these countries a market and a source of supply of truly overwhelming importance as far as Great Britain is concerned; their share of world trade in general is equally imposing. In 1936 their combined exports amounted to 42% of the world's total exports, and they could also claim 5.2% of the world's total imports. Only the U.S.A., Great Britain and Germany sold more than they did and only Great Britain

the U.S.A., Germany and France bought more.

Viewed against the background of geographical position and political importance, this achievement of Scandinavia as compared with the world's leading nations appears particularly impressive.

Moreover, in recent years much progress has been made towards establishing closer economic relations within the group, and a special body called "the Delegations for the Promotion of Economic Co-operation between the Northern Countries" has been meeting at regular intervals in each of the capitals in turn. This is an interesting detail, for it illustrates the fact that despite the greatest mutual goodwill the firmly established inter-Scandinavian jealousies cannot be ignored, and that concentrating all the work in one of the five capitals would have been impossible.

A handsome volume has now been produced by the Delegations under the title "The Northern Countries in World Economy," which contains a great deal of useful information. But, excellent though it is, perhaps it fails in its primary object of acquainting the world with Scandinavia's record through the very fact that it has been published under such distinguished auspices. It has taken these gentlemen a very long time and many conferences before the book could be produced. Consequently many of the figures are already out of date. Moreover, being the result of a collective effort it somewhat lacks cohesion; it is too detailed in parts and not informative enough in others. Finally, being "nobody's baby," it has been launched on an

unsuspecting world in an unfortunate manner. Neither price nor publisher are-stated, and if anyone would wish to purchase this book he would have to take a great deal of trouble before finding out how to obtain a copy.

Yet, with all these shortcomings it is a useful and timely publication. To the student of Scandinavian affairs and to the businessman it is an invaluable source of information. With a little better management it could have been made a splendid book.

So much for present-day economic conditions in Scandinavia. Those interested in Scandinavian history will appreciate Mr. Birch's book on Denmark. That little country was once upon a time "Master of the Baltic" and the metropolis of Northern Europe. Visitors to Copenhagen may even now behold the old maritime fort of "Trekroner" or "three crowns" dominating its harbour and which is a striking reminder of the fact that the crowns of Sweden, Norway and Denmark were once united and represented a whole world of their own. Even after the loss by Denmark of her political and military hegemony, Copenhagen remained for generations the commercial and financial centre of Scandinavia. Indeed, it can be said that the emancipation of Sweden and Norway in that respect is quite recent and in some ways not even completed; many a foreign firm dealing with Northern Europe still operates through the Danes—to the now legitimate annoyance of the Swedes and Norwegians.

Mr. Birch has attempted in his book to describe Denmark's rôle in Europe "from prehistoric times to the present age." The task is a noble one, and it certainly called for a competent author to fill one of the most astonishing gaps in our knowledge of European history. It is curious how little is known about

a country whose ties with Great Britain are so close, so ancient and so manifold. On that score alone Mr. Birch's effort would be welcome. But when, moreover, it is realised that British diplomats "*en poste*" in Scandinavia have not always been conspicuous by their knowledge of, or sympathies for, the Northern Countries, it is pleasant to reflect that here at least is a member of our diplomatic service who has taken the trouble to acquire a deep knowledge of Denmark's language and history—he is now in Guatemala, and I venture no comments on that.

Mr. Birch's book is scholarly and informative, yet it is strangely incomplete. Its last chapter gives the impression of being suddenly interrupted in the middle of a sentence, and it is hard to understand why the narrative should end with the change of government in 1926. A modern reader would have liked less about ancient, and more about recent history; less about the Sagas and more about XIXth and XXth century literature; a great deal more about the way that the present-day social and economic conditions of a remarkably well-balanced community were evolved, and much less about wars and struggles and revolts.

Brandes, who was perhaps the best-known Dane of his day, is so summarily dealt with that it is impossible to appreciate what he meant—not only to his compatriots, but to civilization at large; yet his influence was enormous. And no mention at all is made of Sören Kierkegaard, one of the greatest religious and philosophical thinkers of nineteenth-century Europe. It is a pity that apart from a sketchy outline on the jacket, there is no map—surely, an indispensable help to the understanding of a book of this kind. But the genealogical tables are useful and the illustrations are good.

## "BLACK TOM TYRANT"

By Sir JOHN MARRIOTT.

**STRAFFORD**, by The Earl of Birkenhead. *Hutchinson*. 21s.

"Stone-dead hath no fellow." That is the true measure of Strafford's greatness. The impeachment had broken down. All the ingenuity of Strafford's bitter enemies could not convict him of crime. But "Black Tom Tyrant" must die. If the caged lion were permitted to escape he might give his master. Worse still: he might turn upon his accusers; John Pym might take his place in the Tower and pay the penalty of treason on the scaffold. So Strafford must die, even if it took the monstrous procedure of an Act of Attainder to bring him to the block. Lord Essex was right: "Stone-dead hath no fellow."

Did his death serve the interests of the State? It is interesting to speculate what might have happened, and King Charles not betrayed his servant. But the theme is too large for review. "While the lads about Newcastle sat still" (the phrase is Millie's), the Opposition were in an almost impregnable position. Pym had an army at his back; Charles had none. True, it was a Presbyterian army, and the Civil War was ultimately won by the Independents under Cromwell's command. But that was the way ahead. Pym had the initial advantage and used it. The one really strong man in the Royalist ranks was got rid of; and from that moment the King's cause (given the King's character) was hopeless.

Strafford's enemies were, from their point of view, perfectly right, and their conduct won the applause of the big historians of the Victorian era.

To the most brilliant disciple of that school, Strafford was "the Satan of the apostasy." "He was the first of the Rats, the first of those Statesmen whose patriotism has been only the coquetry of political prostitution and whose profligacy has taught governments to adopt the old maxim of the slave market that it is cheaper to buy than to breed, to import defenders from an Opposition than to rear them in a Ministry. He was the first Englishman to whom a peerage was a sacrament of infamy, a baptism into the Communion of Corruption." It is impossible to read those words to-day without a sense of disgust.

But a reaction has come. S. R. Gardiner wrote with the restraint proper to an historian, not with the extravagance of the *Edinburgh Reviewer*. But Gardiner was denied access to the Strafford correspondence preserved at Wentworth Woodhouse. The least of his disciples was no more fortunate. It was one of my earliest literary ambitions to write a Life of Strafford, but without access to the Strafford Papers I felt that it would be futile to attempt the task.

Lady Burghelere was the first to surmount the barrier which had baffled her predecessors, and her *Strafford*, published in two volumes in 1931, is the first full-length portrait of the man or the statesman that we possess. And an admirable portrait it is: sympathetic discriminating, life-like. As a fact though Lady Burghelere utilized her opportunities with tact and skill, her volumes did not add much to our knowledge of Strafford's political career. Dr. Knowle, the learned editor



of *Strafford's Letters and Despatches* (1739), seems to have left little for subsequent gleaners in the political field. Lady Burghclere, by printing a number of letters not previously published, did, however, enable us better to appreciate the personal character of a singularly lovable man.

Strafford's latest biographer, Lord Birkenhead, has also been allowed access to the archives at Wentworth Woodhouse as well as to those at Belvoir Castle. His portrait, consequently, is pre-eminently a living one, and reflects great credit upon the insight and the industry of the artist. But, again, it is upon the man rather than the politician that unrestricted research has been able to throw additional light. Lord Birkenhead has, however, done good service by dotting the i's and crossing the t's and has evidently neglected no "authority" which could help him to do so. With special pleasure I note that Lord Birkenhead has emphasized the very important work done by Strafford as President of the Council of the North. Nothing in his career—not even his work for Ireland—does him more credit as a man of great administrative capacity, and sympathetic understanding of the position of the underdog.

---

**LA PÊCHE MIRACULEUSE**, by Guy de Pourtales. Gallimard, Paris. 25 francs.

M. Guy de Pourtales, having carried off the French Academy's prize, now takes the Femina Vie Heureuse with his novel *La Pêche Miraculeuse*. The translation, which no doubt will soon be undertaken, thus, like Bottom's, carries a double blessing.

The English reader, meeting the book for the first time in its original language, is puzzled as he reads. It is a simple story enough. The author shows his hero at school; growing up among the respectabilities of pre-war Geneva, falling in love with the wrong person; joining in the Great War as a volunteer probationer-interpreter; falling in love with the right person; and ending

with a pageant of all nations, the first Assembly of the League in November 1920. The hero is a musician, naturally enough. (M. de Pourtales has written works on Chopin and Wagner, besides a definitive life of Liszt). He is sensitive yet sensible; hates the idea of war, yet cannot shelter behind his Swiss nationality to keep out of it; rebels against the protestantism of his upbringing, yet cannot escape from it; knows that all mortal creatures must for ever be strangers to each other, yet is willing to marry and has faith in the woman he loves.

All this makes a pattern with which England is familiar. Why, then, should the English reader feel uneasy? Probably for that very reason. He is so well accustomed to this sort of book in his own language that it is disturbing at first to find the plot and the character that he knows so well set forth in clear traditional French, French balanced and dignified, French without tears. The background of the Bible is here, its rhythms march in the prose of M. de Pourtales as they do in the prose of Masefield. The morality is familiar. Sex to this young man of Geneva is mysterious, almost symbolical, he cannot take it in his stride: witness this scrap of conversation which I take the liberty of translating. The hero is alone with his love; they kiss; he breaks away.

"It's not protestant to be happy."

"Why must you always mock what we can't help being?"

"I'm not mocking. It's irritation. We have no inner freedom, I understood that the moment I landed in Paris. We still go about in the blinkers of the old protestant war-horse, campaigning against sin."

This attitude, here so frankly confessed, is one which present-day England will not admit to. It exists, however, and it is not an affair of the churches. It is a morality with three hundred years of tradition behind it, which insists to the subconsciousness of the English people that extra-mural love-affairs are wrong; that art, like

patriotism, is not enough; that war is a touchstone by which a man may discover his own soul. It is not a tradition defensible by reason, or by the scientific method, and is therefore particularly suited to the English temperament; it holds still and strongly, according to M. de Pourtales, in the city which harboured Calvin and Rousseau.

*La Pêche Miraculeuse* offers familiar problems in an unfamiliar setting. It shows neutral Switzerland troubled and disintegrated by the War. It gives a delightful head-and-shoulders sketch of Sir Henry Wilson, surely taken from life. It describes the first poison gas attack, that in which the Canadians suffered, by a text from Revelation: "And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, and the sun and air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." This is a long and honest book, the kind of book that gets and deserves prizes, as much for good conduct as good writing.

HELEN SIMPSON.

**IRAQ: A STUDY IN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT**, by Philip Willard Ireland. *Cape*. 15s.

**GREAT BRITAIN AND PALESTINE**, by Herbert Sidebotham. *Macmillan*. 10s. 6d.

It is seldom that two books come to a reviewer's hand which can be bracketed so handily as these. For Palestine is like springing, and Iraq the keystone, that arch of land which connects the eastern Mediterranean with our power to the East, and through the medium of this authorship we are thus enabled to see our imperial architects at work with no official hoardings to obstruct the view. The beginning of both stories is curiously alike. The British made a landing at Basra to forestall the Turco-German forces in the regions of the Persian Gulf, and for the better safety of our shipping in the waters to the south. We crossed the desert east of Suez, and invaded Palestine, for the better protection of the Canal.

## Post-Victorian Poetry

HERBERT PALMER

This critical history of English Poetry of the 20th Century seeks to show the development of Poetry since the death of Tennyson, the clashes of the different schools, and gradual change, and in so doing deals with over 200 poets, not including those who are merely listed. 12/6

## Madcap's Progress

RICHARD DARWALL

'A portrait of a figure which no novelist would have dared to invent, the reckless, spend-thrift, drunken, hard-riding Squire carried to the n'th, who seems even more incredible now that he has been given modern treatment at the hands of Mr. Darwall!' —*Times Literary Supplement*. With magnificent colour and monochrome plates in lithography. 18/-

*Prospectuses post free from*

DENT • BEDFORD ST • LONDON W.C.2

**DENT**



One thing led to another, as things do in war, so that the landing developed into a conquest of the Tigris and Euphrates Valleys, and the invasion into an ending of the Turkish régime in Syria. It was only when the War was over that our troubles really began; for the strategy of war gave place to the politics of imperialism, the Arabs in both places shewed little gratitude for their deliverance, and the electorate at home, having taken off its khaki with a determination never to get into uniform again, desired above all that the huge post-war expenditure should be cut off at the main. Thus far both authors have a similar tale to tell, but thereafter Mr. Ireland takes up the close study of a mandatory nation in the making, while Mr. Sidebotham relates the history of Zionism.

The former has indeed dressed up the dry bones of administrative history in fascinating garb. His book is one of real learning, with much material overflowing into footnotes, and yet there is not a dull page in it, the desert sand being not more shifting than the changing scenes in the theatre of Mesopotamia. Iraq, after much travail an independent Kingdom and a member of the League of Nations, is now under a military dictatorship, and there the story ends. The several stages on that twenty years journey are clearly set forth, and during each Britain is seen struggling hard to reconcile three conflicting problems; our duty towards the League as a mandatory power, an attitude of fairness towards Arab nationalism, and a close appreciation of the strategical value of the country for our imperial purpose. Mr. Ireland makes it not altogether disillusioning to see the inner workings of distracted statesmanship.

Mr. Sidebotham, "Scrutator" of the *Sunday Times*, also sees Zionism through a strategical eye, his main idea being of a buffer-State in Palestine, strong and prosperous as only the genius of Jews could make it, and strongly bound to Britain, which shall interpose between an enemy adopting the land road from the north

and his objective, the Suez Canal. Thus, and truly so, are two birds to be killed with one stone; the great ideal of a national home for Jews in the land of their origin, and a bastion of strength for the protection of our own most vital imperial interest. A great beginning has been made, and everywhere the Jewish immigrant has settled, there the desert blooms. Capitalized by world contribution, the settlement has hardly touched the pocket of the British tax-payer. But here again the stress of war has occasioned endless muddle, and the Balfour Declaration, a summit of achievement in war-propaganda, is, the Arabs think, quite out of keeping with other promises made to them. One is driven to conclude that Arabia would be paradise without the Arabs, who do not appear to care for progress or prosperity if it involves the presence of the Jew. Partition, as recommended by the Peel Commission, or as amended by the leaders of the Jewish Agency, is suggested as the solvent of the problem, and perhaps it may be so. The author examines every aspect of it, from either point of view, and concludes that it might be suitable from the strict standpoint of Zionism, but that it would deprive the project of all strategical value. In this instance Britain does not come out well as a Mandatory Power, and certainly the author quotes full chapter and verse in support of his contention. It may be that strategy and idealism are irreconcilable.

L. E. O. CHARLTON

---

**WORLD BRAIN**, by H. G. Wells.  
*Methuen. 3s. 6d.*

Let no one be put off by the faint flavour of doctrinairism in the title of this slender volume. It is the later H. G. Wells at his best, felicitous in phrase, suggestive in thought, outspoken and provocative in criticism, indomitably hopeful in outlook.

The book consists of a number of essays, addresses and talks strung upon a central theme—the need for an



improvement in education which shall fit men to live happily in the large-scale world into which Science has precipitated us. But for Mr. Wells education means a great deal more than class-room teaching. It means an intelligence service for the world. It means, on the one hand, a greater number—a far greater number—of intelligent persons in the community and, on the other, vastly improved arrangements for making some use of such intelligence as there is.

To take the latter point first, Mr. Wells deploras the powerlessness of "the finer minds of the human race" in the face of political and social adventures of the coarsest sort. He brings out the absurdity of a system under which a Freud or an Einstein can be subject to molestation by an ignorant demagogue. But he does not propose to remove the demagogue in order to put the sage in his place. "A professor-ridden world might prove as unsatisfactory under the stress of modern life and fluctuating conditions as a theologian-ridden world." He proposes to diffuse their knowledge so as to make it as easily available as possible for the common modern man. "It is *science* and not *men of science* that we want to enlighten and animate our politics and rule the world."

One way in which he proposes to accomplish this is through a World-Encyclopædia. Several of the papers in this volume are devoted to this theme. Mr. Wells contends—and who that has used the ordinary type of Encyclopædia will disagree with him?—that the world of learning has not known how to present its results to the public. The result of this is that there is always a considerable time-lag between the specialist enquiry and general knowledge, whilst the specialist himself needs to "be redeemed from oddity, from shy preciousness and practical futility." The World Encyclopædia would be a permanent enterprise of co-operation *compelling* learned men "to come to terms with

one another" and would provide "an undogmatic Bible to a world-culture."

The new French Encyclopædia, to which he pays an appreciative tribute, has shown what can be done at a time of financial stringency. Mr. Wells, of course, would go further. He would like authoritative bibliographies of "book-guides" to be as common as railway time-tables and he wants specially low postal rates for books. "Try sending a book, a good fat book, half-way across the world and see what it costs you." He does not mention the facilities offered through the Smithsonian Institute for exporting learned works from the United States.

When he turns from projects to persons Mr. Wells is even more thoroughly in his element. "Why are our Universities floating above the general disorder of mankind like a beautiful sunset over a battlefield?" It is because the so-called educated have been unequal to their responsibilities that, in our "Frightened Thirties" the new type of Nero has emerged, "a poor single, silly, little human cranium held high and adorned usually with something preposterous in the way of hat."

How is it possible that intelligent peoples should fall so low in their choice of leader? Here Mr. Wells' answer is not so explicit as usual. He tells us that

"the human individual is born now to live in a society for which its fundamental instincts are altogether inadequate" and that "he has to be educated systematically for his social rôle." "The social man is a manufactured product of which the natural man is the raw material."

But he does not tell us how or whence

#### THE ARYAN PATH

Published Monthly 1/6

Subscription 12/-

A Journal embodying the spirit of courageous seeking by all aspirants to a philosophy of life and putting forth the fruits of their convictions, exercises and experiences

Specimen copy sent on receipt of 1½d. stamp

17 Great Cumberland Place, London, W.1

the *manufacturer* is to be produced. Whence did Mr. Wells himself derive the dauntless courage and high perseverance which have characterized him throughout his long career as a writer? "It may be doubted" he says "if constructive sociology and educational science can ever be freed from a certain literary, æsthetic and ethical flavouring." Is "flavouring" really the right word? Or is there not here a shy admission that there is in man himself a quality of the spirit which enables him to be something more than raw material to be passively kneaded by the cosmic process?

Yes, certainly we need a World Encyclopædia. But is a World Encyclopædia enough? Or, as Socrates would have put it, is Knowledge sufficient to ensure Virtue?

ALFRED ZIMMERN

**THE CITIZEN'S CHOICE**, by Ernest Barker. *Cambridge University*. 7s. 6d.

**THE CRISIS OF OUR CIVILISATION**, by Hilaire Belloc. *Cassell*. 8s. 6d.

In a mood of quiet, courageous optimism Professor Barker says of the years through which we are passing: "It is good to be alive in these days." It is good to be alive, not only because it is lucky to escape another fate, which is what one tends to feel, but because the world is now so rich in its abundance of spiritual vitality, its philosophical hunger, self-consciousness and ubiquitous movement. In distinction from the negativism of so much in current liberal thought, Professor Barker's lectures reveal a quality of sober, tolerant positivism, which we may well take to heart. His optimism derives, not from any reliable formula of political understanding, but from a personal quality of sympathy. He is a liberal, but his sensibility enables him to catch something of the quality of each of the spiritual movements of the world which come within his purview. National Socialism, Fascism, Communism; he rejects them, not because they mean nothing to him, but only

because his own strong convictions are sufficiently deeply embedded to enable him to lend a sympathetic ear to the compelling murmurs of the age. His book is a collection of careful lectures which were delivered some at Chatham House, some at the Institute of Sociology, some at London University and one at a Liberal Summer School. There is thus a formal, academic element about them all. In each case deep emphasis is laid upon the ultimate personal and moral foundations of political philosophy. Yet Professor Barker's democratic faith, resting upon sympathy, is refreshingly free from that attitude of outraged but feeble horror with which the unpleasant happenings in the modern world are greeted by so many of the would-be democrats of this island.

Mr. Belloc writes passionately. His is a vigorous defence of the Catholic view of the world conflict. He knows his case by heart and writes it down quickly, directly and passionately, without footnotes, references or any documentation whatever. The first half of the book is an easy account of the history of Christendom, the second a description of the gathering sickness of Christendom since the Reformation, the growth of capitalism and its manifold evils. The final appearance of Anti-Christ in the form of Communism now presents our civilization with its greatest crisis, in which all of us, however unwilling, are now deeply involved. Under the aegis of a true Catholic revival, Mr. Belloc would like to see a breakdown of monopoly capitalism along distributist lines, the erection of quasi-guilds and State operation of certain large scale concerns.

Mr. Belloc's book is pleasantly readable, but his view of the world seems eccentric in England, and his passionate manner of dealing with materialism and Communism is as far removed from Professor Barker's tranquillity as London is from a certain microphone in Seville.

RICHARD TERRELL.



**THE IRON CHRIST**, by Francis Berry.  
*Williams & Norgate. 1s. 6d.*

**OTHERS TO ADORN**, by Oliver St. J. Gogarty. *Rich & Cowan. 7s. 6d.*

**MRS. KIMBER**, by Osbert Sitwell.  
*Macmillan. 8s. 6d.*

**THE SILVER BRANCH**—An Anthology of Irish Poetry. Selected with an Introduction by Sean O'Faolain.  
*Cape. 5s.*

**THE GARDEN OF DISORDER**, by Charles Henri Ford. *Europa Press. 5s.*

A poet needs courage to-day to thrust upon a public, so indifferent to verse, a poem which is sustained to the purpose of a passionate narrative. Such a poem is *The Iron Christ*, and it is likely to succeed in its claim for attention because it is so vigorous in its presentation of a magnificent story. That story is a true one. In 1902, Chile and Argentine were massing troops on their frontiers, preparing for war. But Archbishop Benvenuto, unlike most dignitaries of the Christian Churches, stood up in Buenos Aires' Cathedral and preached a pacifist sermon so persuasive that the peoples of the two countries melted down the guns from the frontier forts, and cast a figure of Christ from the metal, which they erected on the highest point of the Andes, between the two countries.

The theme suits the poet. His technique is craggy, fierce. He works in words as Frank Brangwyn works in colours, using great blocks of abrupt and explosive sound, accumulating a mountainous form which sensuously symbolizes the scene of the drama, the mood of the protagonists, and the mysterious mass-passion which controls the situation. Here is a picture of the guns smelting.

"Borne into the arsenals, gaping guns  
Await their execution. Dissected, hurled  
Asunder, while the furnaces mile-thunder.  
Flames joy at confines, suck and cry,  
romp up

Chimneys, spout and cinder-spray the air."

The sermon, the re-action to it, the casting of the Christ and its erection; all remain in the reader's vision,

hammered home by this poet's technique which might be compared to that of Charles Doughty.

Dr. Gogarty is already a legend. We drab English, tongue-tied, hear of his immortal walk down Sackville Street, and his avowal of two swans for the River Liffey that saved his life during the Troubles. We have only latterly heard his poems, brought to us first by W. B. Yeats, and now collected in *Others to Adorn*. And here the poet fulfils the legend. The work is scholarly but it is much more than that. It sparkles. It is crystalline, firmly shaped. There is no padding of mere verse in the book, and a reader can keep the volume by him indefinitely, for reading and re-reading.

"Death may be very gentle after all :

He turns his face away from arrogant  
knights

Who fling themselves against him in their  
fights ;

But to the loveliest he loves to call.

And he has with him those whose ways  
were mild

And beautiful ; and many a little child."

## The Martyrdom of Spain

By ALFRED MENDIZABAL

Preface by Jacques Maritain

"After the welter of propaganda and war experiences it is a relief to find a book which gives something approaching a genuinely impartial account of the origins of the Spanish Civil War."

*The Times Literary Supplement.*

"An outstanding book by a Spaniard, and a singularly well-written one."—*The Observer.*

**10s. 6d. net.**

GEOFFREY BLES Ltd.

Two Manchester Square, London



His temper reminds me of the Elizabethan Sir Walter Raleigh. Compare the above quotation, for example, with Raleigh's

"Oh cruell Time which takes in trust  
Our youth, our Joyes and all we have . . ."

Both poets have a freshness, a freedom, that justify A.E.'s claim for Gogarty. "He is never the professional poet made dull by the dignity of recognized genius."

The same may be said of Sean O'Faolain's approach to Irish folk-poetry in *The Silver Branch*. The majority of the pieces here are translated by him, and they are impressive because of their simplicity and lack of stale poeticisms. His versions are dry, terse, and almost laconic. Sometimes this quality, a positive one denoting personality in the translator, robs the poems of their lyrical poignancy, but the loss is almost repaired by what is imported in the English version.

"I have but one story,  
the stags are moaning,  
the sky is snowing,  
Summer is gone.

Quickly the low sun  
goes drifting down  
behind the rollers,  
lifting and long.

The wild geese cry  
down the storm;  
the ferns have fallen,  
russet and torn.

The wings of the birds  
are clotted with ice.

I have but one story—  
Summer is gone."

Notable too are the few pieces by Robin Flower, a Gælic scholar, and also a poet in his own right. The book is another permanent delight.

The portrait of Mrs. Kimber, by Osbert Sitwell, is in his characteristic vein of amiable satire. The medium is free verse, loosely rhymed and colloquial in rhythm. We part from Mrs. Kimber, pledging her not in wine, but in Victorian period drinks that "From Indian herbs their sepià juice distil."

Mr. Ford is a young American poet. His book of poems is well-named *The Garden of Disorder*, for the verse in it is surrealist, with juxtapositions of images

that have no reasonable relation. I believe surrealism to be a disease, spawned upon ignorance by arrogance. It has done much mischief, and I thank God it seems to have run its course. Mr. Ford is one of those late cases which keep the isolation ward open and the staff grumbling, as I am grumbling now.

RICHARD CHURCH.

#### PUCCINI AMONG FRIENDS, by Vincent Seligman. Macmillan. 16s.

Comparatively few operas have achieved such world-wide fame as *Madame Butterfly*, *La Bohème* and *Tosca*, and yet not a great deal is known about their composer, for Puccini was a sensitive retiring man, at best among his intimate friends. Mr. Seligman is well qualified to produce this book, as his mother—a person of rare understanding and sympathy—was an intimate friend of Puccini and on her death she left several hundred letters, written over a period of thirty years, from the composer, from which Mr. Seligman has now made selections and published, together with a delightful personal memoir of the composer.

An Italian, Puccini had all the mercurial temperament of the Latin race and all the sensitiveness of the artist. He had a passionate feeling for his operas and their fortunes and misfortunes affected him deeply; it is believed that the phenomenal success of *Madame Butterfly* never wholly compensated for his grief at the hostile reception given to its first performance, while the comparative unpopularity of "his beloved nun," *Suor Angelica*, proved a perpetual disappointment to him. Puccini's life was spent, like many another composer before him, in constant battles with librettists (many of them unsatisfactory), unresponsive impresarios and temperamental prima donnas.

The book is interesting for the many illuminating side-lights it throws on famous characters.

E. W. VOSS.

**A CHILD UNDER SAIL**, by Elizabeth Linklater. Cape. 7s. 6d.

*A sailing ship was a faithful friend who repaid with interest all the consideration shown her; but a steamer is only a means of transit.*

Moreover, she was peopled with faithful friends: a carpenter who saved spare wood for the child to make into toy boxes, a mate who held raffles that the child always won; for "sailors made no effort to bring themselves down to childish things, they were themselves children at heart." So memory was a string of gems for the daughter of Captain Young of Greenock, who before she was twenty-one had been in the *Norval*, the *Eurydice* and the *Orpheus*, to Calcutta, Java, Brazil, Cape Horn, Oregon; and she formed an affection for the men of the sea which allows her even now to use none but kindly terms in telling of them. No wonder the experience of those voyages was more enjoyed than the intervals at school. Nor does it appear that Mrs. Linklater's somewhat unfashionable education for a young lady of the 'seventies has impaired her ability to write a story with more than a technical value.

The paradox of the sailing ship was this: a community travelling in one dimension—almost unlimited was in another desperately confined, and Mrs. Linklater sometimes tries to suppress whatever was diurnal and tedious by recalling days bright with that excitement, adventure, or even danger, which the Poet Laureate would have loved. Had she been wholly successful, her tale might have more nearly approached the epic but would have lost its historical and social value. The rescue of a stranger in mid-ocean, after their own boat had been missing for hours in the search; the struggle to land a shark; the braving of squalls as the ship lay without shelter off Montevideo; a fortnight of tempests west of the Horn; these were real and vivid to the authoress, but a reader looking for thrills may still find them with Jukes and Captain MacWhirr. What Conrad

has not given us is a picture of daily domesticity before the fetish of fitness was established; "the menu would vary according to the ingenuity of the steward; but too often he had no ingenuity," and the result would be black tea and slab duff, pink insects in the porridge and weevils in the rice, races with maggots from the biscuit-tins.

Mrs. Linklater well recaptures the atmosphere surrounding vessel and men in different conditions: the pent brooding in doldrums, the feverish bustle in rough weather, and best of all the calming and softening of nerves and tempers as she ran home. And how often some chance meeting with another captain and crew in an American roadstead, some stray scrap of conversation with flags in broad Atlantic, induced communion of feeling with other human beings of the same kindly calling and outlook; and how thrilling it was to make landfall, collect mails, and join in bartering at the port the gossip of

## STEPHEN GWYNN'S

### *Dublin Old & New*

"Mr Gwynn's lovely book moves away at any instant to lovely ghosts. He can remember in any street great talkers, great scholars, great lovers and horsemen, and fighters and fishers. It is nice to note how, through all his pages, the names of Swift and Stella and Vanessa occur and recur. Everything that the Dubliner—away, and without one ghost to his acre or his name—would wish to remember of his city is delightfully here."

—JAMES STEPHENS (*Sunday Times*)

"It will tell the average reader all he is likely to need of the history of the Irish Capital, from its foundation, up to and beyond the Union to the 1916 Rebellion and its sequel."—*The Times*.

(Illus. 12/6 net)

HARRAP



ships and seafarers. Simple joys were the great ones, and in describing them simply, never straining for dramatic effect, even when she might easily have been lured into over-writing, as at the rounding of the Horn, Mrs. Linklater offers the fruit of that most real study, the study of oneself and other people in mutual reaction.

ALAN PHILLIPS.

**THE RUNNING OF THE DEER**, by Dan Wickenden. *Dent*. 8s. 6d.

**PRAY FOR THE WANDERER**, by Kate O'Brien. *Heinemann*. 7s. 6d.

**THE SWORD OF LOVE**, by Rearden Conner. *Cassell*. 8s. 6d.

**CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE**, by Romilly Cavan. *Constable*. 8s. 6d.

A quality of vitality, more or less clearly defined, is what we have learned to look for in novels by young Americans. "A young country," "a sense of the future," and similar phrases have a real meaning even when they have become truisms, and even among the distracting problems that confront the New World today. When Mr. Dan Wickenden's adolescent Mel Thrace, near the end of his book, "faced west, he faced the future." *The Running of the Deer* is not a covered-waggon novel but a fairly simple tale of family life in the upper middle class. There is a fine rhythm to this book, remarkable in a first novel, and although Mr. Wickenden makes no experiments with syntax or vocabulary he contrives an urgency no less in his style than in what it carries. The action is confined to a few days over a Christmas identifiable as that of 1936, the characters to the members of two related families living in a New York suburb. The dismissal of Arnold Thrace from the editorship of a declining literary journal provides a catastrophe, but they all pick themselves up again before we leave them, and nothing more startling occurs. It is the very skilful characterisation that holds the book together, providing a sensation of

development and even of drama, and suggesting that Mr. Wickenden is a writer whose future work will demand attention.

With Miss O'Brien the present reviewer, at all events, is still on foreign soil, for *Pray for the Wanderer* is very consciously an Irish book about Irish people in Ireland. Much of the interest which it compels derives, indeed, from the direct relation of the characters to De Valera's Catholic Ireland of to-day and this moment. Still, we are in Europe, and a sense of impending doom is now and then to be perceived. The slightly desperate virtue of individualism represented by Matt, running home to the Free State from fame as a sophisticated playwright and the wounds of a mastering love, would seem less sympathetic in a period of general confidence. As it is, and tolerant as are Miss O'Brien's dealings with all her characters, her fastidiousness and her civilized catholicity make of him an easy hero, and so powerful is her evocation of the passion of body and spirit to which a term has been set that the contrary claims of strongly-rooted family life are established with difficulty. Yet they draw Matt for a time, and they change him—not violently but in a way that almost surprises him into matrimony with a defensive virgin. The virgin's subsequent return to her jilted cousin Tom does not carry entire conviction, but Tom is not only a delicious character but also (I have taken native advice on this) a credible type.

Miss O'Brien's writing has what is usually called distinction. She invents her phrases, fitting them to mood and purpose. Her compatriot Mr. Rearden Conner, on the other hand, is content with the shavings of older workshops. "At long last," "unbeknown to his mother," "it was not the desire to escape in actual fact, but in spirit"—such verbal associations are not in themselves meaningless, though I think the same could not be said for "his reticence had reached the pitch of a complex." But their cumulative effect



is to numb the reader into laziness, and they simply have not the strength to force his acceptance of a tale of maternal affection turned ugly, of hatred and obstinacy and contempt and embittered alcoholism, of three unpunished murders and of violent encounters wherein the combatants astonishingly survive. Mary Maher, having got by her husband the child she desired, drives him to drink by her savage indifference, concentrates life's purposes in the boy, becomes a byword in the parish, and is finally pierced by the sword of the lad's own love. It is a stark story, intentionally earthy. But it does not smell of the earth. It is heavy with words.

Back in tired old England, no longer even ashamed of the once derided "escapism," Miss Romilly Cavan is content to be a myth-maker. *Characters in Order of Appearance* presents a man between the ages of seventeen and thirty-five, the delightful friends he makes, his temporary glory as a smart dramatist, his love for a girl who shortly eclipses his own celebrity with her dress-designing, the attendant emotional difficulties and then their resolution. The book ought to have a considerable success, for the writer is clever enough to suggest reality in what is essentially a very appealing modern fairy-story. The sun shines when her characters are happy and in love, and the wind and the rain accompany their period of distress.

FRANCIS WATSON.

#### MISCELLANEA

**LILIAN BAYLIS**, by Sybil and Russell Thorndike. *Chapman & Hall.* 5s.

Russell Thorndike, in the second of the two appreciations appearing in this book, tells us many good stories about that remarkable woman, Lilian Baylis, including his own first meeting with her when she was anxious to pray to God to send her some good actors—cheap, believing that the presence of a soldier wounded in the War would aid her prayer. And pray she did, as she did at all times and in all places for guidance in running her two great theatres, the

Old Vic and Sadler's Wells. Miss Thorndike also tells some stories as everyone must who knew Miss Baylis, but how lovable she makes her subject and how lovable in turn becomes Miss Thorndike. Her's is a splendid piece of work, the more so because she is unaware that her love and admiration for Miss Baylis is being transmitted to the written page, as she describes not one but two outstanding women who walked together on the Old Vic stage.

**WILD BIRDS IN BRITAIN**, by Seton Gordon. *Batsford.* 8s. 6d.

In a finely illustrated book Mr. Seton Gordon has a new approach to a subject which never grows old and on which there is always room for another volume providing the author can present his matter in a fresh and attractive form. This Mr. Gordon easily succeeds in doing and his arrangement of chapters



"The man behind the scenes."

THE JOURNAL AND LETTERS

ot

REGINALD VISCOUNT

**ESHER**

Volume 1 1870 - 1903

Volume 2 1903 - 1910

Volume 3 1910 - 1915

Volume 4 1915 - 1930

(To be published shortly)

The period covered by Volume 3 (just published) and Volume 4 (to be published on June 16) of these unique memoirs includes the War years, when Lord Esher was acting as unofficial ambassador between the English and the French. "In my opinion," said Mr. J. A. Sponder in the *Sunday Times*, "these Memoirs are far superior to either Greville or Malmesbury. Esher was an accomplished literary hand. But, above all, he had an abounding interest in the passing show, and in a brilliant way conveys the sense of its movement and glitter and the play of its personalities."

Each vol. 25/- net

**NICHOLSON & WATSON**

under headings such as "Garden Birds," "Birds of Woodland and Hedgerow," and "Mountain Birds" makes the book suitable for reference as well as good reading.

**BALLET PANORAMA**, by Arnold L. Haskell. *Batsford*. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Haskell's knowledge and his access to an unlimited supply of fine photographs has given Messrs. Batsford another opportunity to produce one of the many attractive books for which they are justly famed. Keen supporters of the ballet—and their numbers grow every year in England now that their appetite can be appeased at Sadler's Wells and elsewhere—will hardly contemplate existence without this book, which is published, considering its value, at a very moderate price. Here is the story of Ballet in text and in pictures unfolding its great tradition which began long before La Camargo shortened her skirt a few inches in 1721 to display her shapely legs and extends far into the future when Mr.

Haskell anticipates an even greater following through the medium of television.

**OVER THE NORTH POLE**, by George Baidukov. *Harrap*. 5s.

Modern heroes live their sagas in the air and Baidukov's straightforward tale of the great Russian flight from Moscow to the U.S.A. is an inspiring record of an adventure carefully planned and calmly undertaken. Chkalov, Baidukov and Beliaikov certainly realised the immensity of their enterprise when they took off in the Ant-25, with Stalin's blessing, to fly 5,507 miles non-stop in sixty-two hours over the North Pole, yet a little alarm over ice formation, and a little discomfort in high altitudes was all that disturbed an astonishing journey. The book, translated by Jessica Smith, has an attractive wrapper and some pleasing, though personal, illustrations.

**UNDERSTANDING THE ENGLISH**, by James Howard Wellard. *Hurst & Blackett*. 10s. 6d.

This most amusing book has enough sting in the tail of its remarks to make its value rather less ephemeral than others of its kind. It pokes fun, of course, good solid fun likely to appeal hugely to the English, which "like the yak maintain a vast silence, which can only be the cloak of wisdom," but its general picture is broad and shrewd. "The majority of English," says the author, "will not admit, for instance, that the Scotch, Irish, Americans, or Australians, have any rights in the use of the Anglo-Saxon tongue. They take the attitude that these nations have borrowed a precious heirloom and tend to abuse the privilege." The unfortunate English have, however, abused many privileges and let slip many opportunities for what is "'not done' is more binding on these Islanders than the criminal code itself." Finally among a host of good remarks we find "the trouble with English journalism is English literature." The illustrations are excellent and valuable additions to the text.

## **NOW READY**

My Summer Lists of

## **RECENT SECOND-HAND**

## **PURCHASES**

are now ready.

Many bargains in all subjects  
await you.

Send a card today.

**THOMAS J. GASTON,**  
**76 STRAND, W.C.2**

Phone : TEM. 3048

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

*For the benefit of our many overseas readers we provide here each month a brief sketch by way of introduction of our contributors to THE FORTNIGHTLY public.*

---

The German colossus towers over Europe, and, after the destruction of Austria, in an atmosphere of terrific nervous strain the nations are licking their wounds. It is a time for reflection—sorry reflection—a lull before the next storm. Of the storm-centre itself, Czechoslovakia, we present no detailed picture, since there is a surfeit of information and interpretation in the daily press. But, once again, the strategic implications of Herr Hitler's twin-stroke policy, in Czechoslovakia and in Spain, are set out in an authoritative contribution from Captain B. Liddell Hart. The author is the well-known Military Correspondent of *The Times*: but by his breadth of vision and felicity of phrase he is so very much more than an expert writer on military questions.

The political repercussions of the destruction of Austria are the subject of an article by **Graham Hutton**, assistant editor of *The Economist*, who has recently returned from one of his periodical visits to the countries of the Danubian basin. Graham Hutton has been studying Central European problems—political and economic—for the past ten years, and he can give a really objective view of the situation. That his conclusions are depressing need scarcely be said.

We are indebted to **Ernest Hambloch**, like the two first-named, a former contributor (he wrote last October on *Fascist Trends in Brazil*), for a remarkable analysis of the German psychosis. No one can appreciate the why and wherefore of international friction by a

mere recital of political and economic differences. The toxic elements lie far below the surface, in the different national psychologies. Ernest Hambloch possesses a rare ability to probe down to the roots—thanks to an unusual linguistic training and a lifetime experience in the Consular service in many parts of the world. There can be few Englishmen, for example, with such an intimate knowledge of Brazil and South American phenomena in general. His recent book *British Consul* has had a well-deserved success, and he is now at work on a study of Germany's *Drang nach Osten*.

With the considerations set out in the article *Is there a British Commonwealth Axis?* we come to a question which explains much that would otherwise seem unintelligible in the foreign policy of Great Britain. **J. R. Glorney Bolton** (also an old contributor) has had a varied and interesting journalistic career in India, in Canada and in Fleet Street. He is best known perhaps for his regular contributions to *Great Britain and the East*—where for a time he was in charge of the India section.

**D. W. Brogan** contributes another of his spirited and thought-provoking articles on the political jungle of the U.S.A. There is perhaps no subject less adequately portrayed in our daily press, and we regard Denis Brogan as the ablest commentator on American affairs this side of the Atlantic.

The article by **V. S. Pritchett** is itself a reflection of the all-pervading influence of politics. But, as he suggests, there is a special sense in



which the political 'atmosphere,' so inherent in works of fiction of the Continent, is alien to the British tradition. V. S. Pritchett will be known to our readers as novelist, critic and short-story writer. He has been a contributor to THE FORTNIGHTLY over the last ten years.

Wilbur Burton deals with the fascinating subject of the changes in *moeurs* which have taken place in China since the revolution. The important rôle played by a few distinguished Chinese women, notably the Soong family, has been written up a good deal, but usually only in a superficial, snippety way. Wilbur Burton is a roving American journalist with a positive genius for extracting the essence of social characteristics in out-of-the-way parts of the world.

The usual sketch, which we publish this month, *Cuisine Internationale* might be taken to refer to the general contents of THE FORTNIGHTLY! Actually it is

a most amusing study of a Continental butterfly on the "blushing English rose."

Another problem requiring careful unprejudiced consideration is the rush of box-like flats and tenements which has developed in the post-war period, as a result, both of industrialism and misguided housing reform. A. Trystan Edwards is a distinguished architect and writer on housing questions, whose article 'New Streets for Old,' published in August, 1937, may be remembered.

An unusual subject is taken up in *Polder Folk* by Fraülein Lilo Linke, who has made a reputation for herself in England by her novels with a background of Germany and her political travelogues. Her book on Turkey '*Allah Dethroned*,' published last year, was regarded as outstanding in its *gerue*. She is now engaged on a similar travel-tale of Italy.

---

## THE FORTNIGHTLY BAZAAR

---

The calls upon the generosity of Englishmen and women for political "victims" are continually increasing. But there is surely none that comes home to us with more poignancy than that of the unfortunate Austrian citizens now deprived of their birth-right. As was well brought out in that admirable book by Douglas Reed, *Insanity Fair* (Cape), the lot of the Jews, which evokes widespread sympathy, is actually far less desperate, because of their trans-national connections, than that of the Christians, Liberals, democrats, Socialists, etc., whom a malign fate has made out-casts. We therefore commend wholeheartedly to our readers the relief work being undertaken, for the minority groups of Germans—without any distinction of party, race or religion—under the auspices of the Friends. The work has been going on now for five years. With the addition of the hapless refugees from Germany who had settled in Austria still greater efforts will be necessary, and we appeal to our readers to help all they can. Contributions to be sent to Germany Emergency Committee, Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

\* \* \* \* \*

The National Institute of Industrial Psychology has done for seventeen years much useful work in making work-people happy and comfortable in their work, providing the right kind of human attributes to the right kind of job and ensuring the maximum amount of physical effort and conserved energy in the work to afford the greatest production power to the individual worker. As a result the employer far from losing has gained all along the line, monotony and waste have disappeared and in their place by the application of applied psychology in industry, there comes a new zest for work and an added producing power. The foundation of the Institute dates from the delivery of two lectures, in 1918 by its present principal and founder, Dr. C. S. Myers, then director of the Psychological Laboratory at Cambridge. The Institute was finally incorporated in 1921. It is not and never was intended to be a profit-making organization, but it includes a fee-earning service. To-day the Institute is faced with a grim financial position. It must have additional financial support to enable it to carry on at all. Much work of national well-being is awaiting its services and this demands finance in order to expand. For the combined needs of the immediate present, the progress of the future, for a new building and for an endowment of that building, £250,000 are needed. To those who are in sympathy with the work, membership of the Institute is open for the minimum subscription of £1 per annum. The address of the National Institute is Aldwych House, London, W.C.2.

\* \* \* \* \*

Success for Mr. Richard Church, whose novel *The Porch*, published by J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., has been awarded the Femina Vie Henreuse Prize, sheds some reflected glory on THE FORTNIGHTLY, for Mr. Church has been a regular contributor and reviewer for many years. Born in 1893 Mr. Church began to write verse at an early age, and his first poem was published in the *Clarion* when he was 16 years old. His first book of verse, however, did not appear until 1917 and his first novel, *Oliver's Daughter*, in 1930. The



*Porch* was published just over a year ago and is to some extent based on Mr. Church's own experience in the Civil Service. When *The Porch* was published Mr. Church announced that it was only the first part of a work of greater scope on which he was engaged. The second part of the story is now reaching its final stages. It deals with the years of the Great War, and presents an unusual aspect of the War in that the heroine is at the front whilst the hero is compelled to stay at home. Mr. Church has not yet decided on the title of this sequel.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Left Book Club held a Cultural Week and on Friday, May 20, a meeting was held in the large Conway Hall to discuss "Literature and the People." Mr. Victor Gollancz was in the Chair and many famous literary figures including Norman Collins, Richard Church, Susan Ertz, L. A. G. Strong, A. E. Coppard, Olaf Stapledon, Rose Macaulay, and Rex Warner either spoke or took part in the discussion.

\* \* \* \* \*

✓ The usual half-yearly Index and Title-page will be included in the next (July) issue of THE FORTNIGHTLY.

---

## AUSTRIANS IN DISTRESS

Though the establishment of Greater Germany may have been greeted with enthusiasm by hundreds of thousands particularly of the younger Austrians, and though many British citizens would have welcomed the Union under more normal circumstances, we cannot ignore the fact that the area of racial legislation with all the distress and cruelty involved has been thereby enormously increased.

Friends have been working for the last five years in attempts to bring constructive relief to Germans of the minority groups—non-Aryans, liberals, democrats—both within and without Germany. The events in Austria constitute a new and imperious call to further efforts. Already we have been asked to organise a feeding centre in Vienna for 1000 intellectuals and black-coated workers, to prevent unfortunate people from dying of starvation, while plans for more permanent settlement are prepared.

Think also of the hundreds of unfortunate refugees from Germany, who had settled in Austria and have now been enveloped by the State which has been working out increasing refinements of racial discrimination during the last five years.

---

### PLEASE HELP US TO HELP THEM

Contributions to be sent to

**FRIENDS SERVICE COUNCIL**

**Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1**

---



# CONTENTS

AUTHOR.	TITLE.	PAGE
ACLAND, Richard, M.P.	The Site Values Scandal . . .	556
ANDERSON, Paul . . .	Berlin : Vienna : Prague . . .	83
BARREND, David . . .	Electricity : Control and Current . . .	72
BATES, H. E. . . .	Perhaps We Shall Meet Again— <i>Story</i> . . .	66
BELGION, Montgomery . . .	Publicity by Stealth . . .	325
BIRTLES, Dora . . .	Cuisine Internationale . . .	714
BOLTON, J. R. Glorney . . .	Is there a British Commonwealth Axis? . . .	669
BOND, Freda C. . . .	The Moderns— <i>Story</i> . . .	588
BRIDGEMAN, Lt.-Col. Viscount	The Army and Its Officers . . .	418
BROGAN, D. W. . . .	{ Politics Bloody and Bland . . . } . . .	495
BUCKLEY, Henry . . .	{ The Attack on the Presidency } . . .	686
BURTON, Wilbur . . .	Inside Spain . . .	299
	China and Social Change . . .	732
CALDER-MARSHALL, A. . . .	The Audience is the Thing . . .	725
CARR, E. H. . . .	The Twilight of Comintern . . .	137
CHARLTON, Air-Commodore L. E. O.	The Mischief in the Mediterranean . . .	282
CHURCH, Richard . . .	Shelley's Wife . . .	497
COLLIS, J. S. . . .	The Workhouse . . .	165
CONDLIFFE, J. B. . . .	M. Van Zeeland's Report . . .	317
COOKE, George . . .	Père Duchesne— <i>Story</i> . . .	445
CROSSMAN, R. H. S. . . .	Sahibs at Sea . . .	537
DERWENT, Lord . . .	The Arts To-day . . .	31
DIPLOMATICUS . . .	The New Régime in Roumania . . .	580
DOMVILLE, Admiral Sir Barry	Strategical Realities of the Pacific . . .	438
EDITOR, The . . .	{ Crisis . . . } . . .	257
	{ The Avalanche . . . } . . .	385
EDWARDS, A. Trystan . . .	" Birth Control Barracks " . . .	706
ELTON, Lord . . .	The Decay of Opposition . . .	1
FELLOWS, Alfred . . .	New Divorce Problems . . .	56
FERRERO, Guglielmo . . .	The Rule of Fear . . .	129
GALPIN, C. J. . . .	Air Routes of To-day and To-morrow . . .	595
GELBER, Lionel M. . . .	Britain and The European Balance . . .	271
GORELL, Lord . . .	" Unto the Throne of Heavenly Grace "— <i>Poem</i> . . .	568
GREEN, O. M. . . .	Shanghai and the Japanese . . .	37
GRIFFITH, Hubert . . .	Can the Drama have Social Significance? . . .	429
GRIFFITH, Ll. Wyn . . .	The Problem of Wales . . .	157
GWYNN, Major-Gen. Sir Charles	The Abyssinian Campaign . . .	109
GWYNN, Stephen . . .	Ebb & Flow : A Monthly Commentary 99, 231, 359, 486, 613, 740 . . .	
HAMBLOCH, Ernest . . .	The German Race-Impulse . . .	659
HART, Captain Liddell . . .	{ The Defence of the Empire . . . } . . .	20
	{ Strategy and Commitments . . . } . . .	641
HARUSPEX . . .	The German Army Officer . . .	308
HUTTON, D. Graham . . .	Danubia without Austria . . .	650

# CONTENTS.

AUTHOR.	TITLE.	PAGE
JAMES, A. A. . . .	Australia and The Anglo-U.S. Treaty . . .	181
JOHNSTON, Joseph . . .	The Plight of Irish Agriculture . . .	188
KELWAY, Phyllis . . .	Grey Squirrel . . .	467
KEYSER, John . . .	Discord in Yugoslavia . . .	218
LINKE, Lilo . . .	Polder Folk . . .	697
LIVEING, Edward . . .	British Broadcasting and its Rôle . . .	545
LUCAS, F. L. . . .	Dictatorship . . .	409
MAIRET, Philip . . .	Empire Finance and Agriculture . . .	8
MARTELLI, George . . .	The Italian Challenge . . .	527
MASSINGHAM, Hugh . . .	The Workless . . .	623
MELVILLE, C. F. . . .	The Austrian Tragedy . . .	400
MEREDITH, Brian . . .	Laurentian Prospect . . .	92
MILLAR, Gerald . . .	Inn Signs . . .	605
MORLEY, Felix . . .	The United States and The Far Eastern Crisis . . .	47
MORRIS, A. G. . . .	Billie Crow— <i>Story</i> . . .	332
MOURNE, Alison . . .	Thus Spake Mrs. Gabbet— <i>Story</i> . . .	212
PRICE, Willard . . .	The White Elephant Turns Black . . .	562
PRITCHETT, V. S. . . .	{ Living and Writing . . .	369
	{ Politics and the English Novel . . .	680
ROBERTSON, The Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm . . .	The German Challenge . . .	518
SARV, E. R. . . .	Estonia After Twenty Years . . .	345
SIMPSON, Helen . . .	"Mighty Noble Eating" . . .	291
SIMPSON, Sir John Hope . . .	The League of Nations and Refugees . . .	225
SOLOVEYTSCHIK, George . . .	Reflections on France . . .	571
SPRIGGE, C. I. S. . . .	D'Annunzio's Italy and England . . .	459
STAPLEDON, Professor R. G. . . .	Agricultural Policy . . .	263
STEED WICKHAM . . .	Britain's Choice . . .	749
VIENOT, Pierre . . .	French View . . .	170
VIGILANS . . .	The National Emergency . . .	513
WALBROOK, H. M. . . .	Henry Irving . . .	203
WALTER, K. . . .	Italian Housekeeping . . .	451
WARNER, Jeremiah . . .	Nazi Mirage . . .	391
WELLS, W. T. . . .	Air Raid Precautions and the Public . . .	148
WILCHER, L. C. . . .	The Australian Scene . . .	475
WILENSKI, R. H. . . .	Art and Anecdote . . .	241
WOOD, F. L. W. . . .	Labour's Record in New Zealand . . .	350
YEATS-BROWN, F. . . .	India and the Machine . . .	196